

COLLEGE ENGLISH

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Number 7

Fiction and Social Criticism

GRANVILLE HICKS^{*}

WHAT has happened to the novel of social protest? In the thirties, as everyone recalls, American fiction seethed with moral indignation and social revolt. From John Dos Passos' *The 42nd Parallel* in 1930 to John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1939, our literature was on the offensive. And there was no lack of precedent for this rebellious upsurge. After all, it was in 1906 that Upton Sinclair published *The Jungle*, the most influential of his many novels of social protest, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the best known exemplar of the type, appeared in 1852.

Perhaps we should make a distinction between social protest and social criticism. The novel of social protest is aimed against a specific evil—the institution of slavery, conditions in the Chicago stockyards, the sufferings of the Okies. It points to a wrong, a wrong that can be righted. The novel of social criticism is concerned in a larger way with the social structure. It is broader and deeper, and if its influence is harder to measure, its life is usually longer.

^{*} Author of *The Great Tradition, Figures in Transition, Only One Storm*; literary editor of the *New Leader*.

The great novels of social protest—*Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Jungle*, *The Grapes of Wrath*—are more than that; they are also novels of social criticism. As such they have endured, whereas novels that focused exclusively on specific evils have been forgotten once their purpose was served.

Not much, obviously, can be said in literary terms for the novel of social protest in the narrow sense of that phrase; its importance, if it has any, is historical. But social criticism has been a mighty force in our literature. The first of our major novelists, James Fenimore Cooper, was a forthright critic of American institutions, and his critical novels are among his best, though they have never been so popular as the romances. After the Civil War, Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner wrote *The Gilded Age*, and by the end of the eighties the amiable and esteemed William Dean Howells had been transformed into a bold opponent of an acquisitive civilization. The early years of the century brought a flood of denunciation and exposure—the novels of Frank Norris, Upton Sinclair, Jack London, Robert Herrick, David Graham

Phillips, and a dozen others. The note of protest was sustained in the twenties, and again became thunderous in the depressed thirties. I would not say now, as I did say twenty years ago, that this is our "great" tradition, but surely it is a tradition not to be discounted in any discussion of the American novel.

Since the end of the thirties the novel of social protest has nearly vanished, and, what is more important, the whole tradition of social criticism has been waning. Take the men whose protests carried most weight in the thirties: Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Farrell. Protest has disappeared from Steinbeck's work, become less and less significant in Farrell's. Dos Passos is still protesting, and the fact that he has reversed his emphasis, so that he now attacks Communists, Socialists, and New Dealers and defends businessmen and conservative politicians, is irrelevant. What is relevant is the inferiority, by any standards, of his later work to *U.S.A.*, his great achievement of the thirties.

Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and Farrell are not highly esteemed today, and even the work that is sometimes praised, the work they did from ten to fifteen years ago, has little influence on postwar writers. Faulkner and Fitzgerald are the idols of the moment, with Hemingway a controversial but still influential figure. In the work of each of these men, it happens, there can be found a strong element of social criticism, but this is not the element that is praised by the molders of literary opinion, nor is it the element that influences the young writers. The typical postwar novelists—Capote, Vidal, Buechner, Goyen, Styron—are conspicuously, even ostentatiously, nonpolitical. The kind of problem that bothered the writers of the thirties simply doesn't exist for them.

One thinks of exceptions: Norman Mailer, for instance, whom I shall discuss in a moment, and James Jones. *From Here to Eternity* is worth a close look, for it "feels" like a novel of social protest; the very texture of the prose seems shaped by indignation. But what is Jones protesting against? Not against the army, not against war, not against capitalism. The book cannot be described as apolitical, for its hero, Prew, is the son of a West Virginia miner, from whom he has inherited a certain sense of labor solidarity, and he has long discussions in the stockade with a former IWW named Malloy, who is full of talk about social problems. But though Prew consciously takes his stand with the underdogs, he knows of nothing he can do for them. He can only rebel and suffer and, in the end, die. He belongs, as Leslie Fiedler has said, in the tradition of Goethe's Young Werther, the tradition of romantic *Weltschmerz*, not in the tradition of social protest.

Young Jones, it appears, has plenty of ammunition but no target. Norman Mailer, on the other hand, wrote *The Naked and the Dead* in the mood of Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* and many other novels that grew out of World War I: he was against the army and against war and against the capitalist system, which he held responsible for both. His general, for example, is not merely a military despot but a conscious and articulate Fascist. Flashbacks show that the soldiers in the book were victims of the capitalist system in peace, just as they are its victims in war. Like the radical novelists of the thirties, Mailer knew what was wrong: capitalism.

Between the writing of *The Naked and the Dead* and the writing of *Barbary Shore*, a change took place in Mailer,

of which there were intimations in his speech before the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace held in New York in 1949. When he wrote the first novel, Mailer was apparently convinced that all the major social evils could be abolished by a revolution on the Russian model, a revolution led by Communists. But after the book was published, he began to doubt whether the Russian revolution had in fact established a desirable social order, and by the time he wrote *Barbary Shore* he was anti-Stalinist as well as anti-capitalist. *Barbary Shore* is, of course, a very different kind of book from *The Naked and the Dead*, a confused and turgid allegory rather than a naturalistic document in the Dreiser-Farrell manner. It is also quite different in spirit, for the Mailer of this book is no longer cocksure. He does try to set forth a theory of pure revolution, opposed to both capitalism and Soviet communism, but he cannot manage to be as dogmatic about it as he would like to be. The fact that his protest has to operate simultaneously in two directions gives it a different quality.

Mailer's problem presented itself, in simpler form, to Irwin Shaw when he wrote *The Troubled Air*. At the outset this seems to be a perfect modern instance of the novel of social protest. The object of attack is a real and pressing evil: the injuries inflicted on innocent persons by the unscrupulous manipulation of anti-Communist hysteria. It also appears to be the kind of evil for which exposure is a sufficient remedy: if people knew what was happening, they would stop it. The problem, however, turns out to be more complicated than it seems at first glance. Shaw's hero, a radio director named Clement Archer who takes a courageous stand for

freedom of speech, refusing to yield to the pressure of professional anti-Communists, discovers not only that some of the persons he is defending are in fact Communists but also that he has been victimized by one of them, one he has long regarded as a loyal friend.

Though not perfectly convincing, *The Troubled Air* is a readable and dramatic story, but as a novel of protest it is not a success. At the outset our emotions are deeply involved. We sympathize with Archer, and we are indignant at the persecutions he suffers. But suddenly, at the crucial moment, Shaw turns our indignation against the Communists, and, little as we like Archer's persecutors, we like the Communists even less. The climactic scene is Archer's break with Vic, his old friend, in the course of which he declares war on communism. The position Archer takes is sound, and intellectually we can approve his decision to combat both communism and the reaction that hides behind anti-communism. But emotions cannot be split in that way, and the emotion Shaw rouses in the end against communism cancels out the emotion that has been generated against the reactionary enemies of freedom. Emotionally the reader returns to neutral.

There is no difficulty today in finding evils against which to protest; the problem is to make the protest effective by directing the emotions of the reader toward a specific and satisfying remedy. It is significant that two popular, much-discussed, and perhaps influential novels of social protest—Laura Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement* and Sinclair Lewis' *Kingsblood Royal*—are both concerned with the issue of racial discrimination. Miss Hobson and Mr. Lewis could appeal to the generally accepted democratic ideal, and then go on to dramatize

the discrepancy between our professions and our practices. But most of the urgent evils we face cannot be reduced to such simple terms; in combating them, we find ourselves, like Shaw's Clement Archer, fighting on at least two fronts.

Perhaps we can be so specific as to say that the decline of the novel of social protest began on August 22, 1939, the day when Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany signed their nonaggression pact. I am not being facetious. In the early thirties the literature of social protest and social criticism became revolutionary literature: the one and only, the absolute and final, solution for whatever evils were being exposed was the transformation of the economic system. This was implied in most of the critical novels of those years, was all too explicit in many of them. After the middle of the decade, when economic conditions in this country were improving and when the Communist party adopted the policy of the anti-Fascist people's front, revolutionary slogans became less common. But still there was just one enemy to be struggled against: fascism, as it existed in Germany, Italy, and Spain, and as it threatened in the United States. The Communists insisted that everyone had to choose between the Fascists and the people, the Communists being included among the people, and many non-Communists believed them.

Then the pact was signed, and the Communists, learning from Molotov that fascism was a matter of taste, pulled out of the anti-Fascist front. The result was the discrediting of communism with most of the numerous intellectuals who, as party members or fellow-travelers or mere innocents, had engaged in the anti-Fascist fight under Communist leadership. Disillusionment

had been growing in intellectual circles, largely as a result of the Moscow trials, and after 1939 it flourished. Not only was there disillusionment with Stalin and his brand of communism; a process of far-reaching re-examination began to undermine many liberal and radical assumptions that predated the depression. In particular there was a drastic reaction among the intellectuals against the notion of *the* solution. In the thirties most intellectuals had believed that economic problems could be solved once and for all, even though they disagreed as to the remedies they recommended. After 1939 more and more of them came to understand that social organization is not a puzzle to be definitively disposed of, as one solves a problem in chess and puts the pieces away, but a never ending job. They saw, moreover, that a simple solution was not only wrong but dangerous. The fight went on ceaselessly, and not merely on two but maybe three or maybe a dozen fronts.

The complicating of issues was enough to give pause to the novelist of social protest, but this was not the only factor. Young novelists traditionally revolt against their elders, and on purely literary grounds there might well have been a rejection of social problems as themes for fiction after a decade of intense preoccupation with politics and economics, after five decades in which social criticism had flourished. Add to this that the young writer, as a result of wartime experience, was likely to have an acute sense of his own helplessness in the face of society; add also that the left-wing movement of the thirties had ended ignominiously, both in its political and its literary aspects; and you have compelling reasons for a change of emphasis.

Many of the younger writers think of social problems as both dull and unimportant, and they want to get out and away into the eternal problems of man and his destiny. Obviously this is not a bad thing in itself. What I described in these pages a year or so ago as the novel of the human condition is a genre to which some of the greatest novels ever written belong. Moreover, the preoccupation with man's fate is peculiarly appropriate to the times we live in. Yet a reading of the first novels of recent years suggests that there are dangers on this path, too. There is, for example, the danger of artificiality, as when a talented young novelist, having been told that myths embody perennial human truths, contrives a deliberate modern counterpart for an ancient myth. There is the danger of abstractness, product of a fetishistic attachment to certain fashionable large ideas, such as the idea of Evil. There is the danger of triviality, as evidenced in various ingenious and delicate embroideries of easily manageable themes. Many of the young writers are able, and I believe that some of them may develop in important ways, but the proof lies with the future.

Meanwhile, the social novel itself has been taking an interesting new turn. One notices that in many recent novels the villain is a self-styled liberal: the horrendous Walker Watson in John Dos Passos' *The Grand Design*, the incompetent and contemptible Tom Brett in J. P. Marquand's *B.F.'s Daughter*, the loud-mouthed and dishonest Lieutenant Edsell in James Gould Cozzens' *Guard of Honor*, the fatuous Horton Wilson in John Brooks's *The Big Wheel*, the objectionable Major Harris in John Cobb's *The Gesture*. Moreover, not one of these portraits can be dismissed as mere cari-

cature, though a couple come close to it. Each of the authors does manage to show a connection between his character's unadmirable traits and his profession of liberalism. And there is a closer and perhaps even more devastating analysis of the liberal mind in Lionel Trilling's *The End of the Journey*.

As I suggested above, many liberals have felt in these past ten years that the whole tradition of liberalism needed rigorous examination, and Mr. Trilling, in nonfiction as well as fiction, has furnished impressive examples of the liberal critique of liberalism. The denigration of liberals in the volumes cited sometimes seems to be part of this process of liberal self-purification and sometimes to be the expression of a rejuvenated conservatism, and it is hard to tell where the one leaves off and the other begins. Conservatism at any rate appears to be dominant in Herman Wouk's popular novel, *The Caine Mutiny*. Whereas most of the novels of World War I and some few of World War II damned all officers and particularly regular officers, *The Caine Mutiny* is explicitly a defense of naval discipline and the Annapolis graduate, and the villain of the piece is again a liberal intellectual.

The growth of conservatism at this time is altogether understandable. Surrounded by perils, people are saying, "Let's keep things as they are or they'll get worse." And this, of course, is always the essence of the conservative position, even when it is developed, as it can be, into a many-sided and by no means contemptible philosophy. The interesting question for us is whether the emergence of conservatism on a respectable intellectual level will have significant literary consequences. Our major novelists, almost without exception, have re-

fused to accept American society. Either they have dealt with man outside of society, as Melville and Hawthorne did, as Crane did in his best work, as Hemingway has done in most of his good work, as Faulkner has often but not always done, or they have been explicitly in rebellion against the existing social structure. Our one really great social novelist, Henry James, left America. Howells began by accepting the social structure as given and working within it, but he turned critic and as critic wrote his best novels. The tradition of the critical Howells, as I have said, was the dominant tradition in American fiction from 1890 to 1939. We have never had a Jane Austen, an Anthony Trollope, an E. M. Forster, a novelist who portrayed the social scene not for the sake of exposing its evils but as a way of getting at some significant part of the truth about the human condition.

At the moment we do have two practiced and resourceful novelists of the social scene, both of whom are pertinent to the theme of our discussion. J. P. Marquand's newest novel, *Melville Goodwin, U.S.A.*, is, like *The Caine Mutiny*, a defense of the professional officer. It is also, like so many other Marquand novels, a gently ironic exploration of the nature of success. The narrator, Sid Skelton, whose story blends with that of General Goodwin, has suddenly achieved prominence and wealth as a radio commentator, and he doesn't know whether he is pleased or not. In the end, however, he accepts the values of his world, just as Charles Gray does in *Point of No Return*, and decides that life offers nothing better than a fat salary and a home in the country. Mr. Marquand wants us to believe that this is the beginning of wisdom, but we don't

believe it, and, what is more, we don't believe that he believes it. Like many of his characters, Marquand can neither fully accept nor searchingly question the values of the contemporary world.

James Gould Cozzens is not so brilliant an observer and chronicler of manners as Marquand, but his conservatism is tougher, more skeptical, and more engrained. His aim—the only aim one can attribute to him—is to see people as they really are. He wants to understand institutions, not to reform them, and he wants to understand them because he knows they are important to the way people live and a key to what people are.

More than Marquand, more than any contemporary American I can think of, Cozzens has the attitude that belongs to the social novelist, the novelist of manners in the most inclusive sense of that word. If one tries to say why he nevertheless is a less interesting and impressive figure than Faulkner or Hemingway or even Dos Passos, one falls back on the fact that he is too cool, too dispassionate, too detached. And this suggests that his conservatism may be another form of alienation. He has been swimming against the literary and intellectual current of his era, and though one admires him, one sees that he has paid a price.

We have no clear evidence, then, that conservatism can provide a basis for the postwar literary renaissance that is so long overdue. Until I see such evidence, I shall remain a skeptic. I believe that Marquand and Cozzens deserve more credit than they are commonly given, and I should be happy to see young writers of talent working in their vein. But I suspect that American society is changing too rapidly, and is go-

ing to go on changing too rapidly, to be readily grasped by the conservative mind.

Moreover, I see no reason to doubt that our most sensitive writers will continue to feel a sense of estrangement from the society into which they have been born. Certainly most of our writers today have such a sense, perhaps even those who, like Marquand and Cozzens, pretend not to. It is no longer possible to blame this estrangement on the youthfulness of the United States, as we did in the twenties, for it seems to be felt everywhere in the Western world. (In Russia the estranged writers do not survive.) French existentialism, for instance, assumes alienation as a starting point, and makes involvement not a gift of nature but an act of will. One comes to believe that the alienation of the writer, and of the intellectual in general, is a characteristic of modern civilization.

If a writer feels himself outside his society, he can dramatize his estrangement, embodying it in symbols, or he

can analyze it, the analysis inevitably taking the form of social criticism. Either way, I believe, may be good, and in any case, so long as these are the principal alternatives, neither will be neglected. What happens to the novel of social protest, narrowly defined, depends on circumstances, and isn't particularly important. The novel of social criticism, on the other hand, should not and will not remain permanently in disrepute.

What one can hope is that the novel of social criticism will develop a greater subtlety and a deeper awareness of social complexity. The case against the novel of social criticism has been that disaffection often seems to get in the way of understanding. If, however, we have put aside once and for all the notion of the absolute remedy, the simple panacea, criticism and understanding should go hand in hand. Good novels can and will be written about the American scene, and I believe that most of them will belong in the tradition of social criticism.

"Gold Coast Customs" Reconsidered

HENRY W. WELLS¹

DURING the last few years there has been a marked revival of interest in the Sitwells, accountable in a variety of ways. A literary phenomenon shocking the twenties with their exoticism, long before the second World War they had fallen out of fashion. Now they are receiving much more critical and respectful attention. Recently Osbert and Sacheverell have produced some of their most significant prose. All three, visiting America in baroque trio, have participated

¹ Columbia University.

more closely than hitherto in our literary affairs. Since the war Edith has written what for her, at least, constitutes a drastically new type of poetry, an increasingly serious verse that critics, on the whole a sober, sententious family, view with augmented seriousness. The carefully selected and occasionally rewritten volume of her poetry, 1917-49, with a revealing Introduction, presents her work in fresh and fuller perspective. Her radical evolution through more than three decades becomes fascinating. Her poetry

is now as a rule warmly admired. Her critics recognize that she has without loss of independence written in general harmony with the forceful "Apocalyptic" group of younger poets in England, who, with Dylan Thomas, are presumably on many occasions her debtors. In short, her undeniable heritage from romanticism has happily been tempered in successive waves to accord with current developments. She is a major figure, yet one whose stature still remains much more variously measured than is the case with most of her notable contemporaries.

As her apologists see her today, she has in successive periods of her career contributed some of the wittiest and some of the most moving English poems of the twentieth century. She has been in turn a modern Puck, a modern Lear. There are few gayer fantasies than "Sir Beelzebub," the concluding piece in her *Façade*, or few more poignant expressions of the horror and despair created by the second World War than "Still Falls the Rain," a religious meditation on the bombing of London, or "Lullaby," an ironic threnody to the death of all idealism. It is generally conceded that her early work, "Colonel Fantock," will long be remembered as an exceptionally charming verse elegy in the classical sense of the word. It has itself become a classic, giving us more than one familiar quotation. The delicate pathos of some of her songs and their rare musical quality, many of them with delightfully unconventional musical settings, are widely known and beloved. Less popularly recognized but at least of as great moment are the four semidramatic pieces ironically called "Rustic Elegies," the finest of which is the symbolic "Hambone and the Heart." These reach tragic intensity. Three of them are retained in her latest selected edition. Finally, her "Three Poems of the

Atomic Age" stand among the few utterances, either in verse or prose, occasioned by the dire events which they record that do not appear pitifully inadequate. Pierrot has been successfully metamorphosed into Hamlet.

Such in brief is her diverse record as a poet with one notable exception. As she herself in the Introduction to her *Selected Poems* outlines her history, it is clear that the crux and climax of her remarkably inconsistent career thus far has been her "Gold Coast Customs." From the standpoint of her development it is her most significant and surprising production. Moreover, in the light of the evolution of modern poetry it promises to be regarded as her chief work. Certainly it shows her at the same time closest to the main stream of the most powerful and original verse today and to the conspicuous mastery of its problems. To be sure, in the development of poetry of the last score of years it is a less important piece than *The Waste Land*; it may well be not so good a poem; but not possibly it contains hints for the future even more valuable than Eliot's somber and somewhat irresponsible work. Although "Gold Coast Customs" has, of course, been examined and praised, it has, I think, to date been neither examined nor praised enough. Written in the crucial year 1929 and in many respects fully in accord with the thought and feeling of that momentous time and the years immediately surrounding it, "Gold Coast Customs" both was and is a prophetic work, a safe index to much of the temper and taste of the period between two world wars and a signpost for more literary developments presumably to come. It shows our English poetry in its least provincial mood. Powerful as a work of art, it proves even more significant than perfected, in which respect

it more nearly resembles, for example, the experimental "Song of Myself" than the far more polished and conservative "Scholar Gypsy."

Its most obvious distinction is to unite a modern symbolism commonly found in highly personalized expression with a modern political sensibility usually manifesting itself in simpler and more objective language. Thus it uses a style and symbolism broadly like that of *The Waste Land* and *Ash Wednesday* in expressing feelings and ideas closer to the political verses of Auden and Day-Lewis. It therefore makes a bold and by no means unsuccessful gesture toward uniting the two main disparate streams of the modern aesthetic consciousness, a fusion, as it were, of the abstractions of Picasso and the satires of George Gross. Or, better, it is in English poetry the equivalent of the former's "Guernica." In terms of Edith Sitwell herself this, more than any of her other works, unites the imaginative brilliance of her early pieces, often highly verbalistic and witty, with the imaginative and prophetic seriousness of her later poems, written under the pressure of civilian bombing and the atomic age and the spiritual distress which they occasion. This conjunction of Epiphany and Jeremiah produces something substantially new in English, for which no summary epithet as yet exists.

Her early verse, to use her own favorite description, is experiment in technique. Its literary lacework is both witty and inspired with much self-conscious sentiment: the morning, afternoon, and evening of a faun, now given to silvery laughter, now to a passing shower of tears. It is Renaissance pastoralism heightened with modern sophistication. The more serious emotional, intellectual, or spiritual life is held in abeyance, in favor of playful and delicate artifice. The

mood is a re-emergence of the rococo, with the difference that the modern verse dances more nervously on the edge of an abyss. Subject matter is both aesthetic and retrospective: the poet escapes backward into the imaginary playland of a Pierrot whose more corporeal existence, conceding that he may be said ever to exist at all, is bounded between the ages of Shakespeare and Pope. The virtually religious conversion experienced by Edith Sitwell during the war years completed a development whose genesis, however, may be traced in her verse composed in the later twenties. Classical at least in the scheme of her education as poet, she first tried out her hand in the pastoral before using it to much more serious purpose, and in a mood, to be sure, as un-Virgilian as possible.

Her "Rustic Elegies," like so much of her light verse, admittedly derive their literary impulse from the seventeenth century or shortly thereafter, but in their case the source is the tragic popular ballad, not the aristocratic pastoral. Here for the first time the poet deserted the style that with more modesty than precision she terms experimental, to work instead in relatively serious material. Yet the strongly derivative character of these narratives reduces their own weight. Powerful as the "elegies" are, they still remain in some measure derivative, literary exercises, evoking the fullest expression neither of the poet nor of her contemporary public, neither of her own soul nor that of her age. She attempted a broader canvas, with a far more sociological content, in her "Elegy on Dead Fashion," a poem stillborn for want of a vital will to being. It shows its author in quest of a larger subject than may be contained within mere personalism but hardly in possession of a corresponding growth in spirituality. It is this

growth which appears so conspicuously in "Gold Coast Customs," the poem wherein she first acknowledged her experimentalism to cease and her serious art to begin. Here the artist abruptly finds herself, us, and her aesthetic mission. It was a landfall impossible to repeat, a landfall almost a shipwreck, for its violence paralyzed her pen for a decade. Few writers of our times have come from so remote a distance or penetrated so abruptly or so far into the tragic continent of the distraught twentieth-century soul.

This spiritual missile is the last piece in her *Collected Poems* published in 1930. After producing it she remained silent for some ten years, to be reawakened to verse only during the agony of a world war. Clearly, it marks a culmination. Her latest poetry is in comparison resigned and philosophical, with a strong mystical character. One needs to think carefully to realize it as the work of the same hand. Wiser it may well be; but it is assuredly less marked by verbal brilliance or spiritual agony. A crisis of almost prostrating force lies here. Her art is comparatively controlled, but her heart is broken.

Although to disinterested readers the personal aspect cannot well be uppermost, a sympathetic understanding can hardly fail to give it some preliminary attention. The poem marks equally an aesthetic fulfilment and a spiritual conversion. In it Edith Sitwell renounces the world of mere artifice wherein she has so long indulged herself, although she even increases the technical skills laboriously acquired. She will no longer relax by the blue waves of the 'sea' or admire a Ne-

gress because of the quaintness of her expression or the black gloss of her skin.³ The inference is that a visit to the London slums and docks, in company with a friend, has filled her with spiritual terror.⁴ It should always be remembered that the poem appeared in 1929, the year that began the great depression, and three years after the General Strike. The poem is charged with terror of approaching violence, both from social revolution⁵ and from aerial bombardment.⁶ It prophesies a city in purgatorial flames and, by metonymy, a civilization burning to make way for new and as yet wholly

Of waves, and the great gold suns made wise
By the dead days and the horizons grand!"

"The Canticle of the Rose," *Poems: 1917-1949*, p. 139

³ "Walking beside the pompous main—
That great gold planet the heat of the Sun
Where we saw black Shadow, a black man,
run,
So a Negress dare
Wear long gold hair?
The Negress Dorothy one sees
Beside the caverns and the trees,
Where her parasol
Throws a shadow tall
As a waterfa!—
The Negress Dorothy still feels
The great gold planet tease her brain."

Ibid.

⁴ "And that half of my heart
That is in your breast
You gave for meat
In the sailor's street
To the rat that had only my bones to eat."

Ibid., p. 135

⁵ "Red rag face and a cough that tears,
They creep through the mud of the docks from
their lairs."

Ibid., p. 144

⁶ "The sick thick smoke from London burning . . .
And London fall . . . rolling human skin drums
Surrounded by long black hair, I hear
Their stones that fall,
Their voices that call,
Among the black and bellowing bones."

Ibid., pp. 147-48

^{*} "How far is our innocent paradise,
The blue-striped sand,
Blue-bellowing band

unrealized human conditions. Surging through the lines are violent feelings and thoughts utterly repellent to the classicist, apocalyptic even to the romanticist. The poem is in every sense an apotheosis: the vehement, almost Swiftian expression of a violent world. It would be unrealistic to expect that all its readers should be gratified by it even as a work of art, though admirable by many formal canons it certainly is, as we shall presently see. But it remains a work highly distinguished, unquestionably a masterpiece in its kind. It proves at once typical of many features of "advanced" or "modern" art and by far outdistances in aesthetic merit most productions in this idiom. In some eyes its chief worth will lie in its representativeness, the key that it affords to problems of the hectic and ungracious imagination in our century; it will be a somewhat terrifying example. In other and more sympathetic eyes it will stand simply on its own merits, an experience to be highly treasured, often recalled. The rest of this article analyzes this remarkable and "difficult" work more closely.

To begin with, it is a symbolical poem and symbolical rather than allegorical, for it tells no story and is in a sense "plateresque." In this respect it resembles the aforementioned *Waste Land* and *Ash Wednesday*. Thus if its aesthetic standing is to be justified it must possess an organization less obvious and more abstract than that of more popular verses. There is not even the historical continuity of Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, which gives a spiritual interpretation of successive periods in American history. The architecture is partly that of a Celtic interweave. Or, to change the reference, the development of its symbols or themes

comes closer to music than to prose argument or narrative. The interweaving is between two portions of a heart torn between grief or shame in the presence of a degenerate rich⁷ and a degenerate poor,⁸ Lady Bamburgher's parties⁹ and the dockside slums. Uniting these two themes is a third. For the two groups are equally violent and murderous, one, like the hypocritical Judas, the other, like the impetuous Cain.¹⁰ Both are best expressed by the violence of African cannibals, with their weird art of savage and magnificent masks.¹¹ Thus Edith Sitwell's poem reflects at the same time the world's rapacious capitalism, rapacious communism, and the aesthetic milieu that has turned, with Picasso, Stravinsky, and so many other artists, to the arts of prehistoric Africa. The theme is

⁷"The half of my heart that lay in your breast
Has fallen away
To rot and bray
With the painted mud through the eyeless
day."

Ibid., p. 138

⁸"I only know that half of my heart
Lies in that terrible coffin of stone."

Ibid., p. 135

"One house like a rat-skin
Mask flaps fleet
In the sailor's tall
Ventriloquist street
Where the rag houses flap—
Hiding a gap,

"Here, tier on tier
Like a black box rear
In the flapping slum
Beside Death's docks."

Ibid., p. 134

⁹"Lady Bamburgher's parties" are first mentioned on page 134, the second page of the poem.

¹⁰"Rich man Judas,
Brother Cain. . . ."

Ibid., p. 145

¹¹"Striped black and white
In the squealing light;
The dust brays white in the market place,
Dead powder spread on a black skull's face."

Ibid., p. 133

suggested by the calculated ambiguity of the title: "Gold Coast Customs" refers equally to London, Berlin, Russia, America, or darkest Africa. It begins relatively quietly with meditation upon exotic works of art and violence in remote and long-ago African tribes. All in this poem happens abruptly and without warning. We are thrown suddenly into the London slums and with even greater precipitation into the world of the upper classes (Lady Bambergher's parties).

Much of the extreme tension and shrillness¹¹ springs from the oversubtle line dividing the author herself from Lady Bambergher. For the author is all too clearly a brand snatched from the burner beneath Lady Bambergher's pot of poison tea. Edith Sitwell, histrionic as ever, stages herself as the repentant Mary Magdalene of the British aristocracy. Somewhat parenthetically it is worth notice that "Bambergher" suggests a flirtation with the much misguided political idealism of Sir Oswald Mosley and the British Fascists. There is a suspicion of the anti-Semitism that constituted one of the many scars so sadly defacing Ezra Pound.

But the poem's majesty is best computed precisely by its general ascendancy over these partisan or narrowly personal considerations. It contains far too much truth concerning ourselves, politically, morally, and psychologically, to entitle us to linger over the debatable details of its author's biography and what these may signify for good or ill, as heroic gen-

erosity or criminal irresponsibility. To return, then, to the poem's emotional and intellectual structure: whereas the beginning depicts a cannibal tribe far away and long ago, the conclusion is a statement and a prophecy concerning ourselves and our own world.¹² As the poem advances, the African face is seen more and more to be a mask for the savage face of modern civilization. A meditation on African art leads to a revelation concerning the twentieth century. The further the reader progresses, the more deeply he becomes involved emotionally and aroused and stimulated aesthetically. Thus the work as a whole is by no means a meandering tone-poem in the loose manner of Sibelius or Richard Strauss but, as befits an artist who has profoundly studied the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a fugue in the lofty manner of Bach. Only the post-Romantic emotions are almost hysterical, whereas Bach's emotions are contained. The structure suggests Bach, the mood, Scriabin. The result is, of course, much closer to *The Rites of Spring* than to the *Mass in B Minor*. But if all form is judged to be in a sense classical, a considerable element of classicism remains even in Edith Sitwell's most impassioned work.

The foregoing sketches the basic structural or architectural features. But where so sophisticated a work is concerned, we cannot rest content with simple statement. Edith Sitwell has not studied that

¹¹ "A bugbear bone that bellows white
As the ventriloquist sound of light. . . .

"Hard blue and white
Cowrie shells (the light
Grown hard) outline
The leopard-skin musty
Leaves that shine
With an animal smell both thick and fusty."

Ibid., pp. 133-34

¹² "Yet the time will come
To the heart's dark slum
When the rich man's gold and the rich man's
wheat
Will grow in the street, that the starved may
cat—
And the sea of the rich will give up its dead—
And the last blood and fire from my side will
be shed.
For the fires of God go marching on."

Ibid., p. 149

most decorative of European styles, the baroque, in vain. The development of her work is further seen in her interweaving of those lesser themes or symbols creating the style rather than the plot of her masterpiece. The poem is full of recurrences: this it is which gives it its unity and emotional tone. Something of a competition occurs, for example, between the mordant rat and the corrosive worm. Each is mentioned fourteen times; one might suspect the more classical worm to be victorious, but if, as seems not unreasonable, an enterprising weasel is enlisted on the rodent's side, this faction wins the macabre competition. Monkeys, sometimes designated apes, make eight sinister appearances. There are periodical smears of yellow journalism, dockside mud, nauseating fleas. Important in the symbolism are recurrent uses of fire and cold. For the cold heart needs incineration, human and divine, purgatorial and devotional. It would be by no means belittling to Edith Sitwell's originality to refer here to the rats in Eliot's "Hollow Men" or to describe her entire poem by the title of the last section of Eliot's masterpiece, "The Fire Sermon." Actually, both poets use familiar symbols descriptive of the predicaments of modern man or even of mankind in general. Edith Sitwell is equally in touch with her illustrious contemporaries and fellow-expressionists in several languages, whether Eliot, Cocteau, Rilke, Lorca, or Blok, and with her still more illustrious predecessors. The line, "In the hour before dawn, through this long hell of stone," is clearly indebted to Dante; "These put the eyes of Heaven out" is quoted from William Blake.

The careful reader thus finds opportunity for prolonged study in the poem's thematic organization. What may be called the prostitution theme runs espe-

cially through the latter parts and unquestionably owes something to Blake's words:

The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave old England's winding-sheet.

The theme of the poet's prostrated and divided heart has considerable structural significance. The animal imagery everywhere lends bitterness to the satire (many animals are named besides those already noticed here). The symbolism embraces things, animals, God, and man. Christ,¹⁴ Judas, and Cain are used with fresh and poetic significance and by no means with merely orthodox implications. The symbolism derived from the Negro proves, as already indicated, especially poignant as one compares the Negro servant in the context of rococo decoration and the Negro stevedore on the London docks. (A similar contrast could be noted between the Negroes in Wallace Stevens' most brilliant and baroque vol-

¹⁴ The Salvation Army episode begins as follows:

"Once I saw it come
Through the canvas slum,
Rattle and beat what seemed a drum,
Rattle and beat it with a bone.
O Christ, that bone was dead, alone!"

[*ibid.*, p. 143].

As its last lines testify, the poem is in spirit fervently and almost wildly religious and apocalyptic. But the Salvation Army episode indicates that it is not orthodox in its Christianity, nor does the poem in any sense suggest an ordered mystical system, as do many of Edith Sitwell's works written after 1940. Nevertheless, the apocalyptic conclusion would alone show it not to be conceived in total desperation, and several allusions to Christ foreshadow the more reverent spirit of her later verses. The prevailing mood in "Gold Coast Customs" is a tragic excitation, based, as in Kenneth Patchen's perverid poems, on tension between social idealism and literary realism. Edith Sitwell's poem is violently irrational; but, given the world conditions of the twentieth century, who will venture to call it unreasonable? In such a time, to quote another poet, "much sense in madness lies." How else defend the biblical prophets?

ume, *Harmonium*, and those in Eugene O'Neill's realistic and tragic plays.) It becomes important here that this image serves as further link between the two British themes, Lady Bambergher's parties and the slums and the catalytic theme of cannibalism on the African (not the British) Gold Coast. Among the lesser themes may be mentioned that of the statue, allied to the germinal thought of the primitive masks, and similar variations played on the sinister images from bones. The reader experiences a keen enjoyment as he recognizes how skilfully the poet plays upon her three chief themes and their many derivatives.

Further evidence may be adduced to show that in a truly surprising degree this poem makes fresh and effective use of Edith Sitwell's earlier art and of the forms, feelings, and ideas in the chief poetry of her period. Her radical and imaginative use of sound and color images for emotional effects, usually rasping and shrill, witnesses to the intense nervousity and neuroticism of almost all her early verses. Equally representative is her art-consciousness. Modern music, as indi-

cated, underlies her entire theory of composition. Her blues are conceivably out of Dufy, her blacks from Rouault, her grays from Cézanne, her greens and purples from Picasso. While the more gifted of her two brothers was composing his *Canons of Giant Art*, making important poetry by brooding on the older masterpieces of European origin, she, even more clearly in the fashion of modern eclecticism and experimentalism, was simply returning to the African primitive as catalytic agent for her prophecy of the atomic age. Her poem is thus a major synthesis not unworthy to place beside *The Waste Land*, *The Cantos*, *The Bridge*, *Paterson*, and *The Man with the Blue Guitar*. This is so because it summarizes and expresses so much typical of our times and urgent for our salvation. Among all these major poems it proves in many respects the most tragic, personal, significant, and human. It is by no means the least colorful, musical, or brilliant. It is stored with implications, moral, political, and aesthetic. By all students of contemporary literature it should be long and thoughtfully pondered.

The Achievement of Ernest Hemingway

LEO GURKO¹

IN HIS novels and short stories Ernest Hemingway not only effected a revolution in style—that was felt from the very beginning—but has expressed an attitude toward the contemporary world as relevant at mid-century as when first announced in the 1920's.

Convinced that the condition of man is incurable, he describes how human

beings are forced to live. But he is not content simply to show his characters reacting to the world as he defines it. He goes further and indicates what for him is the right and the wrong way of living. For this reason, Hemingway is a moralist, despite the surface impression of detachment from his materials. It is as a moralist, quite as much as a stylist, that he has made his profound impression upon our time and in the

¹ Hunter College. Author of *The Angry Decade* (Dodd, Mead, 1947).

end led us to find in his work one of the essential statements on life in this difficult century.

The situation with which he deals is defined in his first important novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. It consists of a world which is blank, hostile, or evil and a central character who struggles to come to terms with it. At best, this struggle makes the burden of living barely tolerable. Often it ends in jittery unhappiness—an unhappiness of the nerves and ego, for these are the terms in which human misery has been mainly expressed since 1914.

Jake Barnes, the pivotal figure of *The Sun Also Rises*, gives Hemingway's outlook its basic summation. He has suffered a wound in the first World War that rendered him sexually impotent. Life for him is in a sense over almost before it has begun. As the novel opens, we see him trying to come to terms with a universe that has mutilated him. Like other Hemingway figures, Jake takes things as he finds them and wastes no time in vain regrets. He is not the Byronic hero who shakes his fist at the world and retires to the fastness of his ego to lick his wounds. Nor is he the Dostoevski character who engages in endless self-analysis. Nor yet is he the popular magazine-and-movie protagonist who smiles bravely or grimly as fate deals him a cruel blow. With a minimum of words and self-pity, he goes on living. He drinks a great deal without becoming a drunk, holds down a job as reporter with the Paris edition of the *New York Herald* (a favorite profession for the heroes of our expatriate literature), and attends the bullfights in Spain.

All this makes living endurable. What makes it almost unendurable is his love—hopeless under the circumstances—for Lady Brett Ashley, and hers for

him. He watches her throw herself into brief desperate affairs with other men, as she tries to forget their own painful case. Her efforts here and in other directions prove futile. On the last page she says, "Oh, Jake, we could have had such a damned good time together." And he replies, without delusion or sentimentality, "Yes, isn't it pretty to think so?" Suspicious of the maudlin in himself, he refuses to rationalize his position but, accepting it as a hard immovable fact, continues living as best and as honestly as he can. It is plain that he enlists Hemingway's sympathy.

His attitude is in sharp contrast to that of Robert Cohn, who behaves badly throughout the book and plainly draws the author's disapproval. Unlike Jake, Robert Cohn is in excellent physical condition. He was, in fact, a boxing champion at college, and in matters involving physical contact more than holds his own. But in human relationships he is overanxious and unsuccessful. Cohn is as much a failure at living despite his physical advantages as Jake is a success despite his mutilation.

To use one of Hemingway's key words, Cohn is not *aficionado*. The word refers to the bullfight spectator who knows the fine points of the art. He is not deceived by superficial flourishes or spurious gestures aimed at drawing the plaudits of the uninitiated. Knowing the real thing, he is not to be fooled by a performance short of the top mark or a toreador who refuses to court the maximum danger to himself.

The references are the same to life outside the bullring. Robert Cohn may have all the surface appearances of a man who ought to know how to live, but these are deceptive. The fact is that he refuses to accept things as they are—the cardinal sin in the Hemingway lexi-

con. Though not welcome, he pushes his way into Jake's circle. When Lady Brett yields to him during the course of her general despair, he preens, fancies himself irresistible, and misses the nature of their relationship altogether. When she drops him suddenly, he pursues her against her will and grovelingly exposes himself to insult if only she will have him back. In despair, he assaults his successful rival, the courageous bullfighter Romero, who, by refusing to be crushed, forces upon Cohn a final humiliating withdrawal.

Though far more advantaged than Jake, Cohn lacks the latter's power of adjustment to the grim state of the world and thus misses the only kind of happiness—if that be the word—open to the creatures of Hemingway.

In one of his memorable stories, "The Killers," Hemingway deals with a young person who discovers the nature of the world for the first time. Nick Adams, who figures in several of Hemingway's early tales, is still tender and unbruised when the two gunmen enter the diner where he is working and announce their intention of rubbing out Ole Andreson, the Swede. Nick, angry and afraid, rushes off to warn him, but Ole, tired of running away, is resigned to his fate and refuses to stir. Sick at heart, Nick returns to the lunchroom and engages in a final conversation with George, the other lunchroom attendant, slightly older than himself.

"I'm going to get out of this town," Nick said.

"Yes," said George. "That's a good thing to do."

"I can't stand to think about him waiting in the room and knowing he's going to get it. It's too damned awful."

"Well," said George, "you better not think about it."

This last piece of advice is a central one in Hemingway. You better not think about it. Nick hasn't learned that yet. His first contact with evil makes him want to resist, then to flee it. When he learns the uselessness of flight, he will come round to George's view and accept evil as one does the impersonal forces of Nature.

Evil is indeed one such impersonal force, and how careful Hemingway is to make it appear so. The killers go about their gruesome business as though it were a routine transaction. They express no personal animosity toward their victim. Murder has become a business matter pure and simple. Moreover, with the exception of Nick, no one is horrified. George may be scared; the Negro cook certainly is. But not horrified. Not even Ole, lying on his cot waiting for the end, is that. The terrifying thing about the story is not that a man is about to be murdered and no one can prevent it but that nearly everyone accepts it so unquestioningly. Evil and violence have become organic parts of the condition of man and are no more avoidable than floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. Lieutenant Henry discovers their unavoidability during the war in *A Farewell to Arms*, as does Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Harry Morgan discovers it in the dangerous smuggling business off the Florida Keys in *To Have and Have Not*, as does Manuel, the aged bullfighter in *The Undefeated* back for one more try, in the hot dusty sand of the arena in Madrid. Acceptance and endurance—these are the attributes with which the Hemingway character who knows the score makes his pact with an implacably hostile world.

This metaphysics is very different from recent varieties. It has nothing in

common with the dominant nineteenth-century conception that evil and good are separable elements and that, through sufficient effort, good can be made to prevail. This idea, in its Victorian form, is best seen in the novels of Dickens and George Eliot. Nor do Hemingway's views have much in common with the metaphysics of Thomas Hardy, which they superficially resemble. Hardy, too, believes in a universe bleakly hostile to man, but he powers this universe with a deterministic machinery that in the end grinds the individual man into dust. The individual man in Hemingway may not loom very large, but he is far from being ground into dust and under circumstances almost as difficult as Hardy's manages to hold his head up. Nor is there much affinity between Hemingway and formal Christianity, which admits evil as a permanent part of the world but urges men to struggle against it and argues that this struggle can be victorious only with the aid and intervention of God. If Hemingway's premises resemble anyone's, they are akin to those of the Stoics, who in their Roman day found it possible to endure evil while preserving courage and dignity.

This neo-Stoic gospel is the doctrine that binds together Hemingway's major novels. It can scarcely ever be said of the heroes of these novels: "Don't look now, Morgan or Henry or Jordan, but your emotions are showing." They have emotions and endure misfortune, but they keep a tight grip on themselves and never allow their feelings to stick out so far that they are in danger of tripping over them. Lieutenant Henry is the classic representation of the take-life-as-you-find-it point of view. He enlists as a medical corpsman in the Italian army during the first World War for no better reason than that he happened to

be in Italy at the time. He submits to front-line fire and attends to badly wounded soldiers imperturbably. He falls in love with an English nurse, but, when she dies in childbirth at the end of the novel, he manages to contain his grief.

But after I had got them out and shut the door and turned off the light it wasn't any good. It was like saying good-by to a statue. After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain.

Earlier, during the rout at Caporetto, our self-contained lieutenant, on the verge of being shot by military police ordered to stop the retreat, plunges into the river and in one of those co-ordinated sequences of rapid physical action (bull-fighting, prize-fighting, and big-game hunting are others) that Hemingway revels in escapes with his life. No matter what happens to him—war, love, or incipient death—his reactions remain unruffled and uninflected. It is not that he is a robot incapable of feeling but that he keeps his feelings well in hand and never allows them to extract from him any unnecessary grouching or wailing. It is all that he can do to keep alive without the futile luxury of self-pity.

Harry Morgan in *To Have and Have Not* exists in circumstances different in detail but no less desperate in character. The operator of a fishing boat in the waters between Cuba and Florida, he is forced to do occasional smuggling to stay alive. Caught up in a hard daily struggle for existence, he becomes a kind of case study in Darwinism. There is the savage environment pressing upon a human being strained to the utmost to survive in it. The pressure becomes so strong upon Morgan that at last, after hanging on for a long time and never losing his nerve, he buckles under its sheer weight and dies. He possesses all the attributes of the Hemingway hero:

physical courage, tenacity, sexual prowess, and the will to endure sustained misfortune.

With the appearance of Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a new element is added: the power to think. In the earlier work through the twenties and most of the thirties, all the thinking had been done before the stories opened, so that nearly everyone's attitude was fixed from the start. Occasionally young Nick Adams would stagger under the impact of new awarenesses, but he was usually too shocked to analyze them. The one conspicuous exception was Robert Wilson, the superbly drawn professional hunter in one of Hemingway's most successful short stories, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber." His minute and accurate dissection of Mrs. Macomber as the rich American female on safari had been a sufficient sign that Hemingway's characters could think detachedly.

But they were seldom required to. It was not that Hemingway was incapable of abstract thought but that, like Americans generally, he saw little need for it. Facts, and conclusions rapidly drawn from them, were the pragmatic bread-and-butter upon which he and the American people thrived. The issues created by the depression followed rapidly by the rise of fascism, the second World War, and the unresolved crises hard upon its heels to some degree pried Hemingway, together with so many of his countrymen, loose from their instinctive attachment to the concrete and forced them to deal with general ideas. The basic questions of right and wrong, means and end, expediency and principle, wrapped up in our dealings first with the Nazis, then with the Communists, could no longer be wholly

avoided, no matter how much we longed to avoid them.

In a small way the Spanish civil war summed up these issues and the dilemmas produced by them with terrific intensity. The very smallness of the arena in which it was fought added to its ferocity and made it a perfect microcosm for the tensions of the time. As the century's supercorrespondent, in on all the great events, at the front line of all its wars, Hemingway was inevitably drawn to the civil war in Spain. But this war, unlike the earlier ones, was not simple and could not be taken as it came. Lieutenant Henry could fight with the Italians without bothering his head about moral or even political issues. The Austrians on the other side were no better or worse. They were fighting for land, colonies, power—matters that had little to do with right and wrong; ethical values, if any, were equally distributed between the two sides. But the war in Spain between the republican Loyalists and the Fascist Rebels was to Robert Jordan in far-off America—and to Hemingway and the American public—a moral conflict pure and simple. Which side was right? That was the sole issue.

Because he thinks the Loyalists are, Jordan enlists in their army and when the novel opens is on his way to join the guerrillas in the hills with the job of dynamiting a bridge. Jordan's grandfather had fought for freedom on the northern side in the Civil War, and a remoter ancestor had done the same in the Revolutionary War. With this heritage behind him, Jordan convinces himself that it is his duty to fight for freedom too, and the Loyalists are at the moment its hottest defenders. He arrives at this conclusion by analysis, not by instinct. He turns the issues over in his mind at great length, and only after

long debate of the pros and cons does he reach a decision. He is, in short, a thinking man, the first full-length thinking man in Hemingway, and the first to believe in a cause.

Spain quickly disillusioned him. He finds the Loyalists increasingly dominated by the Communists, who are using the war for their own ends. The Fascists use barbarous methods, of course, but so do the Loyalists. The Spaniards as a people, for all their lovable traits, appear innately treacherous and sanguinary. Before very long, Jordan realizes that it is not freedom and democracy he is defending in Spain but factionalism. Good and evil, instead of being sharply divided, are again all mixed up and about equally distributed on both sides.

At this point anybody else would pack up and go home. But Jordan is a Hemingway figure: he plays his hand as he finds it and does not bow out simply because the world is a corrupt place. Besides, he has a job to do, blowing up the bridge, and Hemingway is never one to shrink from physical danger on ethical grounds. Jordan, as we might suspect, is a first-class lover, and his feeling for Maria is quite equal to his attachment to liberty. He has made friends among the guerrillas, notably with Pilar, who dominates them with her salty and forceful personality. For all these reasons, personal now rather than political, he stays, blows up the bridge, and in the end gives up his own life to protect the retreat of his comrades. Jordan is *aficionado*. He knows how to live when he at last sees things as they are—and he knows how to die.

He sums up the long list of male protagonists in Hemingway—Nick Adams, Jake, Frederic Henry, Robert Wilson, the dying writer in "The Snows of Kili-

manjaro," the major in "In Another Country" who keeps hanging on to life despite the blows it heaps upon him, and Harry Morgan—who are at bottom essentially the same man.

Yet Hemingway's appeal is greater and more complex than the characters he creates. It lies in his somber description of the world, which seems to fit the facts of our experience so well—the facts of the 1950's at that, though his account of them dates back to the early twenties. The era dominated by the atom and hydrogen bombs, by the cold war with Russia that gives every sign of becoming chronic, by the struggle for individual survival within the matrix of hugely mechanized societies, appears to be exactly the universe repeatedly described by Hemingway. It is a universe full of tension. It exerts a pressure on the individual rising in intensity from year to year, making living more difficult and testing his nerves and powers of endurance with increasing severity.

Hemingway suggests that this condition is permanent and that the sooner we adjust ourselves to it the better. Life is one crisis after another. The naïveté which believes otherwise only produces disappointment, heartbreak, and, eventually, fruitless despair. Yet Hemingway is not a fruitless and despairing cynic who argues that one should yield to a harsh universe. To do that is to live badly, and one should live well not because difficulties can thus be eliminated but because it is the only way in which one can continue to exist at all and yet retain that self-belief which alone keeps a human being from emotional collapse. You cannot live with yourself if you do not have standards of bravery, loyalty, comradeship, and some concern for people who feel the same way. Resist-

ance to the nature of things goes on then, not out of naïve hope or philosophical conviction, but from a persistent sense of dignity.

This code of personal honor controls the reactions of his characters to the inexorable facts of the world around them. His most recent novel, *Across the River and Into the Trees*, reveals these reactions with particular acuteness, since they are exaggerated almost to the point of parody. The main character, Colonel Richard Cantwell of the United States Army, is a clearing-house of all the qualities of the earlier heroes, each quality overaccented just enough to make him absurd rather than heroic. He is fifty-one (is it merely coincidence that he is exactly Hemingway's age?) and has a bad heart, weakened by combat in both world wars. The book deals with the last few days of his life, during the course of which he passes through the experiences vital to the Hemingway character, whose virility and integrity require repeated demonstration.

At fifty-one, with his youth at a receding distance, the demonstration is vitally important. He submits to the various tests, passes them with flying colors, then dies on a high tide of psychic success. The first of these is sexuality. A young and beautiful Italian girl, scarcely nineteen and of a noble Venetian family, falls in love with him. Despite the embarrassing persistence of his references to her as daughter, the two fulfil each other in every way. The second test is bravery. Insulted by a pair of sailors, he proceeds to knock out both of them before "daughter's" admiring eyes. The third is physical coordination. Our Colonel shoots ducks from a barrel in a Venetian lagoon as skilfully as he shot enemy soldiers in two wars, which puts him on a par with

Lieutenant Henry, who swam the Piave under a hail of bullets from the military police, and with the author himself during the big-game hunting expedition described in *Green Hills of Africa*. The fourth is comradeship. He has come to love Venice as his second home and is proud of being accepted by the Venetians as one of themselves. He and the head waiter at the hotel, a former comrade-in-arms, have formed a secret society consisting of the two of them, for the purpose of memorializing the one great experience they shared. The act of participation is the decisive element in his contact with others.

He only loved people, he thought, who had fought or been mutilated. Other people were fine and you liked them and were good friends; but you only felt true tenderness and love for those who had been there and had received the castigation that everyone receives who goes there long enough.

He expresses contempt, bordering on snobbery, for the tourists who come to Venice to see the sights but do not feel for the city as he does. Comradeship is secured only by feeling the right way about things, and the Colonel painfully checks and rechecks his own life to make sure that he has reacted correctly. When he reassures himself for the last time, he bids his sweetheart goodbye, shoots his last brace of wild ducks, bids farewell to Venice, and dies.

In a hard world, the novel suggests to us (however awkwardly), it is still possible to develop individual standards of honor, courage, and loyalty and to find in them a deep-seated self-realization. Indeed, nothing is possible but this. Efforts in other directions—to change the nature of the world or to operate outside a personal system of fixed rules and attitudes—are futile.

In such fashion, over a twenty-five-year span, Hemingway has worked out in his fiction a way of life geared to the circumstances of the twentieth century. He has taken the somberest possible view of things, so that no one can accuse him of glossing over the enormous destructive range of our era. He has sought out the death pattern wherever it appeared, on the battlefield, in the bullring, in the African jungle, in the individual consciousness, because only there could the full capacity of man's powers of survival be fully tested. Survival is an individual and intensely personal matter. But it also leads one into intimate union with others similarly involved. While rejecting the cant, the shallow optimism, the booster spirit, the persistent drive toward conformity of American life, Hemingway invokes in his own idiom that most profound and characteristically American ideal: the survival of the individual through the fullest realization of his own powers in free association with comrades who react as he does.

His ultimate achievement lies in the constant revelation of how these powers are brought to fruition, of how men can establish a *modus vivendi* with an unfriendly universe. Through its acceptance and not its evasion. Through resisting its pressures, wicked or hostile though these may be, because otherwise men cannot hold their heads up. Through courage and dignity and unwillingness to crack up. When Hemingway is at his worst, as with Colonel Cantwell, this credo degenerates into snobbish cultism. At his best—and Hemingway is at his best astonishingly often—it exercises a terrific attraction because it fits so many contemporary facts and appeals to the romantic impulse present in everyone which thrills to the prospect of the individual facing up to what seem to be overwhelming odds.

As both Hemingway and the century enter their fifties, it is this credo, charged with tension, developed through dozens of dramatic instances, that makes him one of our most significant writers and among the most relevant recorders of our troubled time.

The Genesis of "Milestones"

WILBUR D. DUNKEL¹

THE procedure of developing an idea into a successful play can now be explained in the instance of *Milestones*. Written by Arnold Bennett and Edward Knoblock during the summer of 1911 and produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, March 5, 1912, by Vedrenne and Eadie, *Milestones* became an international hit, with productions in New

York, Paris, and Berlin. It was revived with critical acclaim in London on October 30, 1913, February 23, 1914, October 30, 1914, November 20, 1920, and February 4, 1930. Although numerous references to this play occur in *The Journal of Arnold Bennett* (New York, 1912) and *Arnold Bennett's Letters to His Nephew* (New York, 1935), information about this collaboration has not been available

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to students of the drama, the appearance of *Milestones* in many anthologies notwithstanding.

The sale of two private libraries, however, has released two scenarios of this play, with the original holograph manuscript, 135 letters, notes, and telegrams from the authors to each other, and thus has made possible this description of the genesis of *Milestones*. Hence the purpose of this essay is to make available this material to teachers of the drama and students of playwriting.

In the original holograph manuscript of *Milestones* occurs the following statement signed by Edward Knoblock and dated "April 1940, London":

This is the original clear copy of "Milestones": Bennett and I met in May 1911 in London. I proposed the subject of the play to him. He liked it. I then wrote out the scenario of the first act. We met again. We fixed on "the family tree" of three generations. On August 1st I went to Fontainebleau, where he was living, bringing him the finished scenario. We started the play, I writing a scene a day ahead of Bennett, which he then rewrote according to his idea. We then sifted the two versions and of these the final result was this clear copy made by me. The play was written from August 3rd to Aug 25th. It was produced by Vedrenne and Eadie at the Royalty Theatre on the 5th of March 1912.

The "scenario of the first act," to which Knoblock alludes, is written on three sheets of stationery, using the reverse side; the stationery has printed on it: "Old Manor, Chiddingfold, Surrey." Here is the transcript for comparison with the play:

1st Idea of play

Rough idea for play
May 28, 1911

To carry out a connected idea with twenty-five years lapsing between each act. It seems to me the best scheme would be to show the rise and growth of a family: beginning in 1860. Then showing that same family in 1885 and last at the present day.

To show a very typical case the head of the family should be a manufacturer in Act I. Should have a knighthood given him in the next act; and become a peer in 1910.

The best case of development of an industry would be the "iron" case. Take a man who owns some iron works cir. 1860 and who realizes that iron will be used in building ships etc—(It was first used in ships in 1864) and develops his business accordingly. Let him in the 80^{ties} realize that steel will take the place of iron. This foresight assures his future.

On the other hand let his partner be the conservative man—who breaks with him because he will not experiment—"go ahead."

In order that both men should live through the play—let them both be in responsible positions at rather an early age. The 1st young man—let us call him Caxton—is 23. His father has died and he is partner in a big iron business. His ideas are advanced. But he is hampered by his partner—an old man Reed (who does not appear in the play) and his son, a man of 24 or so, who both are conservative.

Let this cause the break in the partnership of long standing—the young man Caxton starting by himself, the Reeds remaining in the old business which gradually dwindles to nothing.

In the second act Caxton has become a great manufacturer. It is here that his wealth & charities procure him a baronetcy. He thereupon becomes conservative—through his secured position in life. But Reed who has had a bad struggle to live, irritated through Caxton's good luck becomes at the age of 48 revolutionary. Breaks with his old tradition and if possible joins the labour party working against the manufacturer for the labourer.

Comparison of this "rough idea" for *Milestones* with the printed text reveals the fact that it is the germ developed into the play. Some commentators on the play, however, either minimize Knoblock's share or name only Bennett as the author. Yet *Milestones* is a play significant for representing three generations of a family in three successive acts, and that idea appears from this evidence to have been Knoblock's.

There are, to be sure, several notable changes in the idea before it became the

play. The partnership dissolved in the play represents two families in the business of building ships of wood, not proprietors of an iron business. The name "Caxton" is dropped and that character is named "John Rhead"; "Reed" is renamed "Samuel Sibley." But the conservative partner, though the business "dwindles to nothing," does not become a "revolutionary." Yet the lapse of twenty-five years between the acts is maintained, and the young man with foresight for building iron ships does become knighted and through his benefactions wins a baronetcy.

There is, however, a second scenario, between the "rough idea" and the finished play, to be considered. Though it completes the plot suggested in the "rough idea," it too differs from the printed version of the play, carrying on the changes already noted between the "rough idea" and the play. But, as might be expected, the second scenario provides the more interesting and significant material, particularly in the portrayal of character. At this level the collaborators develop fully the original situation by shifting the emphasis from plot construction to characterizing incidents as if, indeed, their fully conceived dramatis personae were now determining their own actions. This life-like temper of the characters may explain the continued success of *Milestones* in the theater. The idea obviously began with a situation and well-defined types of characters, but it became a play revealing the influence of social conditions on various persons.

How does the familiar play differ from this scenario? The most important difference between the play and the scenario occurs in the depiction of John's sister. She is named "Rose" in the scenario and "Gertrude" in the play.

And Sam's sister is named "Winifred" in the scenario and "Rose" in the play. But the important lesson in playwriting is the change of John's sister from "the old-fashioned girl of no courage" in the scenario to the forceful person who contrasts for the audience John's former liberalism and foresight with his increasing conservatism. In both the second act and the third, Gertrude, as the frustrated spinster, directs the audience's attention to Emily's giving up the man she loves in order to marry the older one approved by her father; likewise, it is Gertrude, again, who argues with Emily and John that Emily's daughter not be forced to repeat her mother's mistake but be allowed to marry for love. Thus Gertrude transcends any concept of her apparent in the scenario. By her continued courage and opposition to John's social ambition, she, rather than Sam, becomes the chief force pitted against her brother.

In the beginning, when John ends his partnership with Sam, the conservative partner, Gertrude breaks her engagement to Sam. In the scenario she then becomes a "faded rather acid woman." Likewise in the scenario Sam's sister breaks with her family in order to marry John. But in the play Rose, after her marriage to John, accepts his dominance.

A minor point of confusion for the reader is the changing of the surnames of John and Sam from the scenario to the play. "John Rhead" of the play is called "John Selby" in the scenario. "Samuel Sibley" of the play is named "Sam Reed." So it became not merely a matter of changing "Selby" to "Sibley" and "Reed" to "Rhead," but "Selby" "Rhead," and "Reed" to "Sibley"; nevertheless, "John" remains "John" and "Sam" is "Sam" in both scenario

and play. Perhaps the collaborators discussed these characters by their first names in writing the scenario and then shifted the surnames before writing the play.

If Bennett, then, should receive credit for changing the portrayal of John's sister, as this evidence seems to indicate, his development of other characters from types to individual persons appears to be a likely speculation. For the play gains interest from Gertrude's liberalism once shared by her brother. She becomes a "chorus character" at times, or the *raisonneur* of the French *pièce bien faite*, giving the audience the authors' point of view on the well-made situation.

The depiction of Ned Pym in the play as a friend of the family does not follow the Ned "Pyne" of the scenario as "wavering" so much as merely genial. Hence his marriage to Emily, after he becomes Lord Monkhurst, is less unpleasant, notwithstanding the fact that Emily gives up Arthur Preece, the "Alfred Neggs" of the scenario, to marry in accordance with her father's wishes for a titled son-in-law. Here, then, is another instance of an unpleasant character being made rather attractive during the metamorphosis from scenario to play. And this, too, seems Bennett's contribution.

In general, Knoblock's scenario suggested possibilities of social criticism, whereas the play is a drawing-room comedy. But the holograph manuscript of the play contains too many changes for anyone to deduce precisely the contributions of the collaborators in details. The original ending of the second act is followed by a revised ending used in the theater and subsequently printed. But the revised ending is so superior to the original that one wonders why both are preserved in the manuscript. Did Knoblock write

the original and prefer it? One may conjecture at length about the numerous revisions and interpolations of words and phrases in the "clear copy." Whether in Knoblock's handwriting or not, who is to say that Bennett did not suggest some of them? These emendations in the text of the "clear copy" appear to be revisions made after the production of the play, possibly in preparation for printing, since the revised ending of the second act, made during rehearsals according to Knoblock's statement, appears in the manuscript.

This material thus indicates that Knoblock supplied the idea and created the situation from which he and Bennett wrote *Milestones*. Such changes as occur in the plot structure stem from reconsideration of the effect of the situation upon the individual characters. And since these delineations of the characters are not implied in either the "rough idea" or the scenario, Bennett's participation in these developments becomes highly probable. Furthermore, Bennett's hand in the dialogue, chiefly in the matter of characterization, seems altogether likely as one turns from snatches of dialogue in Knoblock's scenario to the dialogue of the play.

To sum up. Knoblock appears to have thought and written in terms of the theater; Bennett to have developed the personalities of the characters with talk and incidents recognizable by the audience as true to life. These inferences from the scenarios and manuscript of *Milestones* are further supported by letters written during their collaboration in dramatizing Bennett's novel *Mr. Prohack*. Hence Knoblock may be regarded as primarily the playwright, "the play doctor," whereas Bennett, the novelist, gave to the play the life-like temper that transcends the bare bones skilfully arranged by Knoblock.

The English Teacher and Spiritual Values'

J. W. ASHTON²

FROM the beginning of our republic emphasis has been put on the necessity of popular education. Education and public responsibility have been deemed co-ordinate to each other. In the twentieth century that emphasis has been steadily increased with the further insistence that every citizen must have the opportunity to go on in the educational system to whatever level his capacity will permit him to go. The result has been a steady growth in the number of students at every level, but it has been particularly marked in high school and post-high school educational institutions.

If even only some of the recommendations of the report of the President's Commission on Higher Education are carried out, we can look for a still greater increase in the next decades in the number of people who go on through senior high school and into colleges and universities or to other post-high school educational institutions.

In providing this extension of opportunity, we have demonstrated convincingly our faith in the form, and presumably the usefulness, of education in a democracy. We have not, however, showed the same concern for a careful understanding of the educational function to be served by this continuation in formal educational activity. Increasingly, the emphasis has tended to be on

the realization of material ends, the securing of a better job, the raising of the standard of living, or even simply the keeping of young people out of the labor market before they can be absorbed. In the long run, however, this faith in education (which perhaps it should be noted is often accompanied by a deep suspicion of the result of the educational process) must justify itself not solely, or not even primarily, on material grounds but by what it does to the individual as a human being; by the way in which it opens up for students richer and fuller understanding of themselves and a deeper possession of spiritual resources, which will enable them to meet adequately the problems of a complex and puzzling world. Our experience in the first fifty years of this century has amply demonstrated that simply material values bring us neither happiness nor solutions for either our domestic or our international problems.

While the teacher of English recognizes the importance of public education as a means of providing for such measure of economic security as can be provided (and we have seen that there is really no such thing as permanent economic security), he insists that this cannot be the major function of education if a democracy is to continue to exist and to make its ideals survive. At the present time in Soviet Russia it is said that a far larger amount of money is being devoted to the development of education than is so provided in this country. Certainly

¹ Read at the forty-first annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, November 20-24, 1951, at Cincinnati.

² Indiana University.

there is widespread opportunity for education there; but this provision is entirely in the direction of material development. The experience of the Nazis in their period of greatest strength in Germany before World War II illustrated also the danger of educational programs designed to present a warped view of society and to indoctrinate in only one direction. The opening-up of opportunities for mass education is not in itself a guaranty of human freedom. If those who are offered the educational opportunity are indoctrinated in the belief that the individual is of little or no significance and that machinery, whether it be industrial or political machinery, is of prime importance, freedom will soon be lost, for freedom can exist only where individuals are esteemed highly enough to make freedom worth while. An educational system in which there is not a clear understanding of the need for spiritual concepts which go far beyond immediate material aims cannot justify itself in a society which depends upon the individual as a free, responsible participant in the whole pattern of the life of that society.

I am not going to suggest now that the English teacher has sole responsibility for the development of this situation or these qualities. We do have, however, a certain strategic position which not only gives us a great opportunity but also increases our responsibility. For one thing English is the only one of the humanities which is still almost universally required in our educational system. Not only in the high schools but also in the colleges throughout the country there is still the requirement of at least some work in English composition and, rather less widely, some work in literature. Our influence may be more widely felt than that of those in any other area.

Second, we teachers of English are concerned with a creative process. This is not a mere playing with words. In a world and in an educational system where much of the work consists in training for and by repetitive processes, the development of mechanical aptitude, the following of carefully preplanned patterns, the study of English, whether composition or literature, offers the opportunity for a creative activity on the part of both teacher and student that must not be lost from our education. Perhaps I should make clear that I am not talking about the hope that every English teacher cherishes of producing a creative writer—indeed, of producing whole classrooms full of creative writers—a hope vain and, in view of the present state of publishing, happily unrealizable. I am reminding you, however, of that creative activity involved in the development of an idea, in seeing and making clear for others the relationship of part to part, and the development of these parts in all their complexity to a unified whole. Fundamentally the same kind of response is involved in the reading of literature, reaching its peak in such an experience as Keats describes in his sonnet "On Rereading *King Lear*,"

When through the old oak forest I am gone
Let me not wander in a barren dream,
But when I am consumed in the fire
Give me new PHOENIX wings to fly at my desire.

Tendencies in the teaching of English militate against our meeting the need for the assertion of these values in our teaching. The first of these is the danger that we become so engrossed in the history of literature, in its surrounding circumstances, that this becomes an end in itself, at its worst a mere cataloguing of names and dates and titles and influences; at its best, perhaps, some reading of snips and patches from more or

less representative works. It is an escape for the teacher who has read little and will not read much more. Unless we come to close grips with the literature itself, in its completeness, however, we cannot hope to provide that stimulus to creative thinking, the development of that insight into character, which the study of English offers.

In the other direction there is the tendency toward aestheticism, the valuing of details of form so highly that no work, other than a brief lyric, is likely to be seen in its entirety. This is not at all to attempt to argue the merits of the "new" criticism, which in its essentials is not new at all. It is only to point out that an exclusive concentration on the formal aspects of literature, however important they may be, is to limit the range of our understanding of literature and to keep our students from seeing it as that rich and full commentary on life which it is.

A third danger grows out of the very specialization which we have developed in English studies. As in so many other fields, the limited problem of the Doctor's dissertation too often becomes the center of the teacher's interest, and an obscure, or at least secondary, poet of the eighteenth century (who may be of considerable interest and importance when viewed in proper perspective in his relationship to the whole current of literature) comes to take precedence over the real literary masters of the period. It's not so much that we come to know more and more about less and less but that in too many cases we lose perspective as teachers and as scholars both and, as a result, narrow and limit our insight into literature. What should be a part of our background, helping us to understand the major works, becomes the thing in itself.

Hardly worth mentioning is that con-

cept of teaching literature as leisure-time activity which had popularity in some circles a few years ago. Clearly such a concept offers opportunity for little more than the most casual and superficial reading. If there is no more to the study of literature than this—indeed, if this is our major concern—we may as well accept all the pap-wash that appears on the reprint shelves and that has occasionally got into the curriculum and say we have no serious function as teachers.

Carlyle's doctrines carry little weight in these days, but when he talked about the poet as seer, as man of insight, he was describing with considerable accuracy the conception that many a great literary man has had of his own function and of the importance of his work. We cannot brush off as mere figurative language or literary convention, for example, the claims of poets to immortality for their verse. Spenser clearly conceived of himself as a man with a mission as poet and hence of poetry as a high calling. Wordsworth's *Prelude* is an extended treatment of the subject of the nature as well as the education of a poet and is all-conducive to the concept of the poet as one who saw and could express fundamental relationships. You will remember that on one occasion he tells how, in one of his periods of loss of aim, he spent a night at a party "in dancing, gaiety, and mirth," and coming home in the first light of morning had a mystical experience.

Magnificent

The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,

And labourers going forth to till the fields.
Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the brim
My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

They were men with a mission, not simply professional poets (though they were both that too in the broadest sense). They saw the need to interpret the world in which they were living in such terms that others less gifted than they might have their eyes opened by that magic that gives to the customary and unattended a new light of interest and meaning, the magic of creative interpretation, the magic of poetry.

It is this concept and this spirit which one finds in great literature generally. When Aristotle speaks of drama as an imitation of life, he was thus early setting up a kind of critical standard which has continued to be of great significance. His concept of *katharsis*, whatever his exact meaning for the term may have been, clearly implies an emotional and spiritual response to tragedy. Further he sees the function of the writer of tragedy as that of presenting men not solely as they are but, to some degree at least, as they should be and so introduces that concept of the ideal man who nonetheless is related to everyday reality, which has marked not only tragedy but most great literature at all times. We are thus concerned in our teaching with universal aspects of man as they are presented in particular situations. The surrounding circumstances, interesting as they may be, fade in importance beside the penetration into problems of human judgment and the deep concern for the basis of human actions in literature. It is this characteristic which refutes the arguments that only the contemporary should be taught

because the contemporary is close to the experience of our students. The very fact that literature is the fullest record which we have of man's aspirations, of man's analysis of his mistakes, of man's problems and the way he faces them, this very fact gives a meaning to the study of literature and a responsibility to the teacher of literature which is hardly shared by any of the other areas of the humanities.

What are some of these spiritual issues with which literature is concerned which are of particular importance to us in these days? The first of these is, as has already been suggested, the emphasis, at least until contemporary times, on the essential importance of the individual. Indeed, even the contemporary writers who question the significance of the individual, who see men as incapable creatures in a deterministic world, nonetheless give significance to mankind by their very presentation of his problems in the imaginative form which they use. Mankind has been worth writing about because the problems of mankind are recognized to be relatively unchanging and perennially interesting, because of the almost infinite diversity of men and their responses to the world in which they live, because the proper study of mankind is man.

In the second place, great literature has always been concerned (except sometimes for lyric poetry) with the question of the nature and place of evil in the world and man's responses to it. This may be the basic theme, as it is in *Paradise Lost*, with Milton setting out to justify the ways of God to man by showing how evil came into the world; or it may be, as in *Oedipus the King*, an acceptance of the presence of evil or, to be more exact, of unhappy fortune, and developing in unforgettable terms the

picture of the desperate striving of the individual against the fate which he knows and from which we realize he cannot escape. It may be that bitter acceptance of an evil world against which one can only strive desperately which one finds in the despairing cry of Edgar in *King Lear*, "World, world, O world! But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee, life would not yield to age"; or it may be that elaborate development of the problem of evil which we have in *Macbeth*, where Macbeth, under no compulsion from the witches, but by their suggestion and the compulsion of his own ambition, makes what seems to him to be the single decision to murder his king, who is also his relative and his guest and thus multiplies the crime. He multiplies it, however, far more than he at first considers, for he finds that the one crime leads inevitably to others

I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er

[III, 5, 136-38],

and we have the development of a profoundly tragic spirit in this picture of a man who might have been a great and good man, and might conceivably still have been king, but who threw away the good in his character for the sake of immediate access to the throne. Perhaps there are no more tragic words in literature, or in life anywhere, than in that speech of Macbeth's when the world that he has built for himself comes crashing in upon him and he sees all that he has hoped for, schemed and plotted and murdered for, turn to dust and ashes.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Third, we may observe that, without becoming moralistic, great literature does demonstrate the inevitable procession of cause and effect, the observable fact of the inescapability of the consequences of our acts. Macbeth's career is but one of many examples of the creative artist's clear perception of the fact that we cannot "trammel up the consequences" of our acts but that each decision that is made brings its own consequences. Whether the implication be that this is the working of fate or the power of heredity or environment to mold our lives, or whether it is based on a concept of freedom of the will such as one finds in Shakespeare and Milton and many of the other great writers, the fundamental relationship remains. This decision made today at this moment does not die in the making. It lives on to qualify or determine other decisions in different times and for different people—and neither the times nor the people can be known to us at this moment. This very fact is one of the major sources for both comedy and tragedy. It is as clear in *The Way of the World* as it is in *The Return of the Native* or *Strange Interlude*. It is one of the touchstones that distinguishes effective literature from the wish-fulfillment psychoses of the dream worlds of popular magazines and run-of-the-mine movies. This is an issue of particular importance in a world like ours, where the tendency grows more and more for us to fool ourselves as to the ends of our actions or to shut our eyes to the consequences which may come from the decisions which we make. In some ways it seems to me the most powerful moral

aspect of literature, not because we can say confidently that a decision is always necessarily good or bad, but only because the literature makes clear that the consequences of the decision are inescapable.

In addition to these aspects of literature there are, of course, other areas in which literature has the capacity for bringing insight and spiritual depth to individuals. A major concern of great literature is the relationship of emotions to action and conduct. Literature may serve as a means of the deepening and enriching and understanding of the emotional patterns of humanity. It offers a union of intellect and emotion in the kind of balance that the Renaissance saw as ideal. But more than that—more, for example, than the understanding and poetical interpretation of love which one finds in *Romeo and Juliet* and the despairing and disturbing pictures of marriage that one finds in Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* (to take only two quite disparate examples)—there is the fact that we have a whole body of literature, particularly of poetry, which has as its major aim the setting-forth of these aspects of life which are not primarily material. I am thinking not only of the great body of devotional literature, which is of particularly high quality in seventeenth-century England, but also of many other literary treatments of the themes of love and sorrow and death and sacrifice which run through literature in all ages and which testify to the endless aspirations of mankind. One has it on a humble level in so modern a work as *The Death of a Salesman*. One finds it

fully developed in two sharply contrasting pictures of the change and development of British society in the present century in *The Forsyte Saga* and in *Parade's End*. It is there to open and arouse our whole beings until we say with Hamlet, "What a piece of work is man."

What does this involve for the teacher of English? First of all, it demands a breadth of preparation; an understanding, through direct contact, of the great masterpieces of literature; the development of critical sensitivity and responsiveness that gives depth to the presentation of belles-lettres. It also demands a kind of experience in life, a concern for human beings and their problems that is completely mature. If we are really concerned with making real to our students the deep spiritual values which are so rich in great literature, we cannot depend on a glib methodology (however useful it may be) obtained at the expense of a full and rich experience of literature itself, nor can we hide ourselves in any remote towers that shut out the light of strenuous, often overwhelming experience.

The teaching of literature, in short, calls for the development of a rich personality in the teacher and for constant thoughtful reading in a field so wide that none of us can hope to cover it completely.

We must be humanists, with a small *h*, because it is only as we see man in all his imperfections, but also in all his aspirations, that we can set literature in its proper place in our own lives and in the lives of our students.

Occupational Attitudes among Teachers of English in Colleges of Technology

THEODORE PEARCE¹

ALTHOUGH the atmosphere of a college of technology is one of the most healthful in which English can be taught, the situations facing the teacher of English in this atmosphere often breed occupational attitudes peculiar to representatives of the arts in an intellectual climate dominated by scientific or technological studies. Unlike the teacher of English in the college of liberal arts, who enjoys equal prestige with his confrères, the teacher of English in the college of technology must continually defend his subject's importance and place in the engineering curriculum. He is sometimes surrounded by fellow-teachers whose caustic arrogance springs from "a conviction that science is the only pursuit worth the time and effort of students";² and he lectures to classes whose surly opposition to English seems justified in view of schedules heavily loaded with mathematics, science, and laboratory courses. He is faced with the necessity not only of teaching his subject matter as well as he can but also of proving its importance. The healthfulness of the atmosphere stems from the accepted verity that competition is the essence of progress.

Realizing his predicament, the teacher has three alternatives. He may resign

himself apathetically to his fate and spend a good share of his time longing for the cloistered seclusion provided by the ivy-covered walls of the college of liberal arts. He may—and often does—thrive in his environment, enjoying the competition and justifying his subject's importance to himself, to his colleagues in the technological departments, and to his students. But occasionally, bewildered by the complexities of his position, yet aware of certain responsibilities, he becomes imbued with an overzealousness which leads to several common occupational attitudes.

The first and probably the basic occupational attitude acquired by the overzealous grammarian (I use this term in its broad sense) is his blind denial that a difference exists between the subject matter which he would ordinarily teach in a college of liberal arts and that which he should teach in the college of technology. Although we teachers of English may extol the virtues of a liberal education, we are also quick to differentiate between a liberal and a specialized (i.e., scientific or technical) education. Moreover, we recognize this difference as one of curricula. To be consistent, therefore, we must admit that the difference extends into the English curriculum. Whether or not we believe in the adequacy of college degree courses in engineering as compared with those in liberal arts, we must admit their necessity

¹ Michigan College of Mining and Technology, Houghton, Mich.

² See B. B. Bennett, "Professional Vices of Teachers of Engineering and Science," *Journal of Engineering Education*, XXXVII (June, 1947), 825-27.

as well as their difference; and we must accept the fact that our courses in English should differ from those in the liberal arts college. Our teaching should not differ in quality; it must, of necessity, differ in content and quantity.

Of course, the question arises: "What should be different about it?" Basically, our teaching of English must differ because of the type of student we teach and the time allotted to us for that purpose. We must be candid enough to admit that our students are not the liberal arts type; their interests, aptitudes, and purposes are different. They often choose a career in science or engineering because of a disinterest in liberal subjects. They bring to our classes not only their disinterest but also the resulting (and sometimes shocking) lack of acquired skill in reading and writing. We are usually given two semesters in which to administer a remedy and to produce students competent in the use of their mother-tongue—a remedy popularly known as "freshman composition." Except in some colleges where an additional semester or term of composition is required, our students thus end their careers in our classrooms.

Regardless of how much time is allowed them, some instructors of English believe that they must at least go through the motions of covering the same subject matter ordinarily included in more extensive and more numerous courses in the liberal arts program. Consequently, their freshman composition courses embrace some grammar, perhaps syntax, punctuation, and other basic material plus such ramifications as short-story technique, the subjective essay, metaphor, simile, public speaking, discussion groups, essay analysis, introduction to literature, etc. (Any standard text in freshman composition only par-

tially covers the list.) The frequent final result of such a program is a lack of ability on the part of the student to write a simple, formal, but effective description of a basic machine, much less a coherent laboratory, inspection, or research report.

We cannot expect to obtain satisfactory results unless we work within the scope of possibility. We are usually unanimous in our admission that our primary objective is to develop in the student the ability to use mature, logical, clear, coherent English—not highly stylized, but the style most acceptable and most effective in technical reports, articles, and business correspondence. We can achieve that objective only if our classroom work centers about it. The instructor who, at the end of the year, laments the inability of his students to write a well-developed paragraph has little excuse. His complaint is not only a tacit declaration of what should have been his major objective but also a confession that he had neglected it in favor of something else.

The instructor's feverish race to cover more ground than is practical is closely akin to a second occupational attitude: his passion to sugar-coat the pill of freshman composition. Realizing that "motivation" and "interest" are necessary, he often avoids mentioning or stressing grammar, punctuation, and themes for fear that these terms would frighten or offend his students. (Is it possible that the instructor feels apologetic about his subject?) Instead, he may lead his students in merry little chases through magazines and newspapers to find examples of styles of writing, articles to imitate, and "timely" pieces whose contents can be discussed and enjoyed in class. Having sat through such English courses with many typical engineering students, I could comment at length on

their ineffectiveness and futility. The obvious danger is that the student will lick off the sugar and leave the pill.

A final occupational attitude with which teachers of English are sometimes afflicted is a belief that they are wholly and solely responsible for their students' social mores, social maturity, and appreciation of art, ethics, and aesthetics. It is admirable that teachers of English feel so deeply their own responsibility toward their students' educational and social development, but that feeling often leads to the inclusion, in all-too-brief courses, of material not even distantly related to the problem of how to write an effective paragraph. Although they should be keenly aware of secondary responsibilities, their first is to teach students the basic skills of oral and written expression through which they can appreciate the greater intangibles. Hearing a group of English instructors discuss their current problems, one might surmise that theirs was the chief mission of evangelizing in behalf of the humanities. On the other hand, if every college instructor had half as much interest in his students' humane development as does the instructor of English, the perennial complaint about the lack of "broadening influences" in the college of technology would disappear. The solution of the problem rests not primarily with the instructor of English, as he is sometimes wont to believe. It rests with every instructor, with the entire college, and with the philosophy of education embraced by the institution.

If the instructor of English overemphasizes his own responsibility for the humane development of his students, his colleagues' natural reaction is to say, "You've got the ball; you carry it." If he does, he risks neglecting his other obligations and leaves himself wide open for the

final criticism from these same critics: "Why can't this senior write a logical sentence?"

Suggested solutions of the dilemma of the engineering college English teacher often entail merely reshuffling the same objectives, or perhaps redecorating them in a "new look," with the result that the courses are still overloaded with material worthy of inclusion but only distantly germane to basic composition.

To do his job most effectively, the teacher of English must channel his enthusiasm in the teaching of basic English courses within the limits of recognized major objectives. However, the worthwhile material intended to broaden the engineering student's understanding of social problems and appreciation of the liberal arts need not and should not be removed from the curriculum. The place of this material is in an integrated general studies course designed for it, and in elective courses with a definite place in the engineering curriculum, rather than in basic English courses. Thus the consciences of a great many teachers of English may be eased, their time in classwork (limited as it is) may be devoted primarily to the teaching of basic skills, and freshman composition, so called, will return to its rightful place in the technological curriculum as a respected and individual subject, not a survey course in all phases of the writing craft and not a four-year liberal arts curriculum condensed into six semester hours.

The effectiveness of the teacher of English in the college of technology can be secured only when his zeal is tempered by an analysis of his first responsibilities: what he *can* do, what he *should* do, and how well he can do it. No matter how worthy his desire, he cannot afford to let it outrun performance.

Introducing the Sophomore to His Imagination

CALVIN D. LINTON¹

I SUPPOSE that all of us who teach have moods occasionally when we feel that modern college students, particularly those in our own classroom, have sunk to an almost irredeemable state of mental obtuseness and moral vacuity. With the sharp corner of an examination question we prize open a doorway into their minds and, with Samson, cry "Dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon." But then, normally, our indigestion or whatever it was passes, and we look with kinder eyes at the eager morning faces about us and decide that we really are glad we did not become stockbrokers or engineers.

Recently, however—that is, for about two years—I have become growingly concerned over a crippling deficiency which more and more students in the humanities reveal. I have tried vitamin pills and longer sleeping hours; but the alarm persists. It is difficult to describe the deficiency precisely, but it boils down, I think, to an almost total atrophy of the powers of the imagination, at least as applied to the reading of literature, and a resulting inability to get any more out of a sophomore course in literature than the bare statistics. There is little evidence of the uniquely vitalizing experience which art should provide, little power of absorption and integration, and a pathetic faith that a poem has been "learned" when its verse form has been mastered. The unique ontological status of a work of art as a living organism, a

complete entity, is completely uncomprehended.

Most students have never been taught that there is a vast difference between the technique of absorbing a work of art and that of studying a segment of science or sociology. With memories turned on to full power, painfully alert to any incidental (and normally inconsequential) fact which may, they think, be useful later on an examination, they scan the words on the page, the imagination as inert as a cold waffle. They are told that this sonnet of Wyatt possesses certain artistic virtues, and they carefully list them without ever testing them on their own pulses. It is true, of course, that a good reading of a passage will make a few students sit up with an expression which reveals that something important has taken place—but usually only a few.

One result of this memory-and-sweat method of studying literature is that rarely do essay-type questions produce on the examination anything more than a hodgepodge listing of facts. We write hopefully: "Both Milton and Pope present in their works a view of man and his nature appropriate to the age of the author and to the author's own personality," and we request the student to comment significantly on the idea. In response, we get two lists, one noting everything the student has ever heard about Milton (about three-quarters of a page), another list (somewhat shorter) about Pope. Memory has bestirred itself and disgorge. The question might just

¹ George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

as well have read, "Milton and Pope—give."

This state of affairs is not only depressing to the instructor, it implies a state of mind which is dangerous for the community and the nation. What I mean is this: The inability to employ the imagination in the reception of an integrated work of art, with a parallel inability to frame an organized, balanced, reasoned interpretation of such a work, is a crippling one for any citizen of a free society to possess. The government of a free people is the product of the imaginative and creative thinking of its citizens. Mere memory cannot manufacture the solutions to new political, social, and ethical problems. There must be understanding, the power to draw from the well-filled mind those pertinent data upon which a reasoned and constructive solution may be built. Much is said of the comparative values of different "disciplines" in the educational curriculum. To my mind, the most vital function of the humanities discipline is precisely that the student learns to think independently and to organize his responses into a reasoned attitude. "The mark of an educated man," wrote the statesman John Morley, "is that he knows when a thing is proved." In almost every other division of his college work the student is taught, not to think independently, but to learn dutifully. And this must be so. The formulas of chemistry are not, at least in elementary areas, open to much argument, nor are the principles of algebra. The student learns the "truth," and he is required to record it without change on examinations. Even in the pseudosciences, such as psychology and sociology, whether justifiably or not, there is a prevailing air of authoritarianism which requires the student to respond in a set pattern.

And so when, in a literature course, one tries to emphasize to the class that there is no such thing as a "right" or "wrong" answer to an essay-type question, that there are only good and bad answers, the students are bewildered. They are even more bewildered when they have listed, completely at random, reasonably accurate data relating to the proper names in an essay question and receive *F* grades for their efforts.

Now I realize that it is not only futile, it is unfair and unkind to complain about students as though their function was to come to class and delight the instructor with their acuteness and erudition. They come to be taught, not admired, and in my own experience I have found that the best way of dealing with the deficiency defined above is to confront it head-on with the students themselves. Not at the first class meeting but after a week or two of lectures and discussion sessions. The ideal time is after an examination, when a large number of class members have received poor grades for fumbling attempts to handle the essay question. If the proper atmosphere of friendliness and co-operation has been established already, the instructor can proceed on a man-to-man basis of helpfulness.

The class should be told that the difference between studying any form of art and other areas of human activity is the difference between life and the component elements of life, between counting the bricks of a building and being moved by its architectural beauty, between measuring a girl's height and falling in love with her. It may be explained that only the imagination is capable of thus embracing, *in toto*, the nature and force of an experience instead of merely dissecting and analyzing it. Further, then, the imagination is the tool which will produce the better grade with less work.

This can be demonstrated by reminding the students that no labor is involved for them to recall vivid experiences of their own lives. Thus, if one has *lived* a sonnet or a novel (as no chemical formula or algebraic principle can be), the discussion and interpretation of our experience on an examination will cease to be a chore.

Now before the instructor can go much further in discussing the function of the imagination, he must realize that almost every form of amusement open to modern youth has so stultified that faculty that, quite literally, many of his listeners do not know, of their own experience, that they possess it. A few years ago, when reading was still the chief source of pleasure for most young people—whether they read about Louis XI or Dead-Eye Dick—the imagination from childhood up went through a natural development and strengthening. Every line on the page had to be transformed by the imagination into setting, character, action. The comic book renders this impossible. Before the imagination has a chance to rear itself feebly erect, it is slapped down by the work of the cartoonist, whose blatant colors, skimpy lines, and stereotyped figures form an impenetrable barrier to real enjoyment. The experience is as depressing as confronting, on page 415 of one of the older novels, a Victorian conception of the heroine, carefully drawn complete with simper. Such a depiction inevitably falls far short of the exquisite beauty which the imagination has conjured up. But the crisis can be met—the hand is simply draped over the offending picture until the page is turned. This is not possible in the case of the comic book. The story *is* the picture, and to the open-mouthed child studying the ghastly thing the experience is one exclusively of the optic nerve.

So when he comes to Shakespeare and reads

This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses . . .

what happens? The answer, unfortunately, is—nothing. The bright air of Scotland, filled with sunshine and the colors and scents of the countryside, remains as far from the reader's imagination as Scotland does from his physical being. Indeed, the imagination has largely atrophied.

The movies, of course, impose a slavery similar to that of the comic books—though less vicious in effect, since occasionally true creative imagination operates in the medium. But the most successful imagination-killer of all is television. Whatever may be the cultural and political value of the medium, its capacity for injuring, perhaps destroying, the power of imagination of a whole generation of American youth is incalculable. Art must be experienced, not merely observed. Before the television image, youth lies inert on the base of its spine and is spoon-fed the pabulum of standardized, commercialized "art."

Normally, along about here in the discussion with the class, the students will begin to respond, either favorably or with irritation. Some will mention other ways in which our modern culture inhibits the development of individual imagination and will begin to develop a healthy resentment. Other students, it is to be hoped, will reply heatedly.

When the argument abates, one can turn to a few examples of direct, effective description and let the class visualize them. The novels of Stevenson are excellent for this purpose. The students are requested not to study the lines but to feel them, to see them. They are reminded that the pictures and moods con-

veyed are of no earthly "practical" value—no more so than a picnic, or a piece of music, or a kiss. They have no "exchange value," for they *are* that for which "practical" things like money are expended. It can be pointed out that the laborious process of, say, learning to type is endured not because of any aesthetic enjoyment derived from punching the keys but because the skill can be sold for money, which in turn can buy experience—a trip to the mountains, a book, a dinner with a friend. But on that page which lies open before them there lie experiences which for richness and variety, far surpass the scope of any individual's own life.

So look at *Gawain and the Green Knight* (or any other excellent narrative). Of what value is the description of the appearance of the unexpected visitor at Arthur's feast? Only so that the reader may transcend the barriers of time and space, may fairly feel the crisp gold wires entwining the green mane of the mighty horse, may experience that quick catch of the breath which marks life at its height—so that he may, in short, have the sheer fun of being present at so fascinating and strange a scene.

But there is a slight catch. No form of pleasure in life makes its full appeal at once, without discipline and training. If one wishes the pleasure of ice-skating, he must go through a period when he is frequently semirecumbent. If one wants the pleasure of playing the piano or the violin, he must for a long time offend every ear within hearing range, including his own. There is always a subtle temptation to be content with such capacity for aesthetic enjoyment as we now possess because of the effort involved in learning new forms. But just as the pleasure involved in picking out a one-finger tune on the piano is pallid compared to the richness of chords and runs, so the fun of

a comic book or a Hollywood "western" is poor stuff beside Chaucer and Milton.

Each class is different, of course, in its response to a discussion of this sort. Some pick up the ball, and the instructor has, at the end, to be little more than referee. Others, I am afraid, come to the end of the period only slightly more enlightened than before. In any event, the session may well end with some attempt to show how much better the imaginative student will do on the final examination. The essay question demands that the student build, as it were, a structure in accordance with a general architectural plan, which is the question itself. The materials of the edifice are the mechanical facts of literary history, the works of art studied, and the personal aesthetic machinery of the student. The sure way to fail the examination is to dump the materials, like a load of bricks, in the backyard of the instructor's mind and say, in effect, "Here, build the house yourself." This is the actual effect of listing facts with no imaginative putting of them together. The difference between training and educating is that the educated mind can work under its own steam, creating new solutions to problems from the raw materials of life and experience in accordance with the individual's own personality and character. Training produces mere conditioned reflexes. It has been said that you can train a seal but that you cannot educate it. One is reminded of the eminent scientist who was asked if the marvelous new electronic calculating machines were not just about equivalent to the human mind. "When that machine asks *me* a question," he replied, "I may agree."

And so, I tell my class, the essay question assumes that they are adult human beings capable of determining for themselves the fruit of experience. They are

out of their nonage. The instructor has told them what he thinks are the significance and artistic validity of a given bit of literature; it's now up to the student to decide for himself and to present his views, on terms of equality with the instructor, as convincingly as he can. To grade the papers of a class which has had this pep talk demands, it is clear, great care, understanding, and humor; but the pedagogical result is, I believe, worth the effort.

In summary, we may as well face the fact that, to an increasingly depressing extent, our students in sophomore literature classes arrive with little or no training in the art of enjoying the printed

page. It's not their fault; it's simply our cross. We have to try to imagine how it feels to confront a line, crystal-clear and perhaps deeply moving to us, which quite literally conveys no recognizable idea or feeling whatsoever to the student—we must try to imagine this and deal patiently with it. We must continue to demand that the student learn a certain minimum body of bare facts; but it is much better to have him learn to use his imagination and think that "medieval" is spelled "mid-evil," as two students in my career have thought (put the blame where you will), than to have him go through his college career thinking that literature is no fun.

Lesson Planning

It never is because I do not try
To govern all the forces of my mind
And deep within my tutor soul to find
Some worth-while aim, quite apt to satisfy
Inspectors' norms, and then to simplify
Approaches. Nor did I ever find
Time-plotting spaced to suit the student mind
Is that which makes my planning go awry.

But this is it—they crowd about me so:
Poor Lear and dead Cordelia, Melisande,
That glass of Friar Bacon, all the show
Of Cleopatra and the Arcadian land—
They seize upon my truant heart and then
I impotently lay aside my pen.

SISTER DOROTHY MERCEDES

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE CONVENT
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

Round Table

THE FLESCH FORMULA "THROUGH THE LOOK- ING GLASS"

The Flesch formula focuses on the writing side of writer-reader communication—on helping us write readable writing. Because of a particular interest in reading, however, I like to look at the formula in reverse—to focus it on the reader. What are the implications of this reversal for those of us who teach English? More specifically, just how important are differences in reading-ease score to the student or to the teacher who makes the assignments?

Test A, Parts I and II, from the Harvard University Reading Course, offered an excellent opportunity to investigate that matter. Each of the two parts contained a selection of about equal length from the same subject-matter field. The directions, format, and type for both parts were identical, the comprehension check questions of the same kind and number. Although there was nothing in the administration of those two parts to indicate any difference, the two parts did differ in difficulty, the first part having a reading-ease score of 20 (very difficult), the second a score of 44 (difficult).

Data from a hundred students in sections of an adult extension class in efficient reading revealed the relationships among readability, comprehension, and rate shown in Table 1. In other words, a difference of 24 points on the Flesch scale resulted in an average difference of about 8 points in comprehension and about 70 words a minute in rate. As the results indicate, most students tended to adopt a rate appropriate to the difficulty.

A look at the extremes, however, is needed to round out the picture. Some students apparently have a highly developed sensitivity to differences in difficulty and

are able to adjust rate accordingly. Others are what might be called "one-speed" readers, making little or no real adjustment to different difficulty levels.

For example, the twenty-one who showed the strongest tendency to vary rate with difficulty read Part II from 99 to 298 words a minute faster than they read Part I, their average increase in rate being 144 words a minute. At the other extreme, the twenty who were least flexible read Part II from 4 to 30 words a minute faster, their average increase being only 20 words a minute. The average comprehension for the first group was 75.9; for the second, 63.7.

TABLE 1

Readability	Average Comprehension	Average Rate
Part I: "very difficult" (20)	66.5	234.6
Part II: "difficult" (44)....	74.7	305.8

By use of the formula, instructors could select passages at two or three different difficulty levels and check their students' rate and comprehension. Or, after a brief discussion of the problem in class, each student could be encouraged to explore for himself any variations in rate noticeable during his reading of such things as a popular magazine, an *Atlantic* article, and a college textbook. Such explorations should bring desirable insights and result in increased flexibility.

The formula seems helpful in still another respect. We know, for example, that forcing a child to struggle with reading matter definitely beyond his ability is to invite frustration and undesirable attitudes toward books and reading. Yet it is so easy to forget that principle in dealing with mature-appearing college students. We need to be

reminded that college freshmen vary in reading ability all the way from about the sixth-grade level to a level beyond that of the average college senior. A University of Minnesota committee reported that, of the freshmen, approximately 20 per cent read "less efficiently than the average eighth-grade pupil."

In light of that range of ability, we need to know at what specific level any particular student should read in order to insure maximum growth of interest and ability. For example, one student from the efficient reading course read initially at the 6.6-grade level, according to published norms. His comprehension scores on "very difficult" and "difficult" material for the first seven class sessions were 20, 20, 20, 30, 20, 20, 30—what might be expected on the basis of chance alone. On the other hand, with material of "standard" difficulty he could see progress. Initially his comprehension score on that material was a low 45, but by the last of the seven sessions his comprehension had increased to 55, 55, and 65.

Work at the "standard" level or slightly below would seem the proper prescription for that student. A sixth-grade reader is not made a twelfth-grade reader by being dropped into material of twelfth-grade difficulty. The first step is to make him a seventh-grade reader, and so on. In *The Art of Plain Talk* Flesch refers to that as "reading up," a practice in line with what we know about growth and development.

But what about the challenge in reading? It is still there. We do not stop with material the student reads easily and well; we begin there. We must expect neither too much nor too little. It is hardly a challenge to ask the impossible. Yet it is a difficult line to draw—that between the difficult and impossible, the difficult and possible. The one leads to failure and discouragement; the other to the satisfaction of a challenge successfully met.

Certainly no one formula or principle will furnish all the answers. We need to make intelligent use of any and every available aid in our attempts to develop more

mature, critical, and interested readers among our students. The readability formulas should not be overlooked.

JAMES I. BROWN

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KNOW THE CAUSE BEFORE APPLYING THE CURE

When someone visits a doctor and complains of chills and muscular aches, he isn't plunged into a tub of ice water to break his fever or given rubbing liniment to assuage his pain. A physician knows too well that the elimination of symptoms does not cure a disease. If he finds a syndrome that indicates bacterial invasion, sulfa drugs or penicillin may be prescribed to attack the infection at its source and thereby restore good health. Careful diagnosis of basic causal factors, it is important to note, always precedes treatment. The same is equally true of remedial reading.

A perusal of the literature on reading reveals that all too often remedial work parallels the ice-water and rubbing-liniment analogy. Methods, techniques, and gadgets are employed that concern themselves primarily with manifestations of reading sickness rather than with the amelioration of causal factors.

In working with retarded college readers, the writer has been impressed by the ease with which marked improvements take place when attention is focused on amenable causal factors. The following cases serve as illustrations.

Mrs. X., an attractive woman of thirty-five, entered the reading clinic with scores below the twentieth percentile on a standardized reading test. During the administration of the California Test of Mental Maturity (one of a battery of tests given for diagnostic purposes), Mrs. X. put her head on her arms and began to sob audibly. Through an interview which was scheduled the following day, certain facts were uncovered. Mrs. X. had a Master's degree from a well-known eastern university. She had been a fine student and a voracious reader. Recently, however, along with a

number of reverses, her husband divorced her and remarried "a more intelligent woman." The divorce and her husband's remarriage were a tremendous blow to her ego. She spoke freely of being dumb and incapable of coping with college work because of "mental deterioration." At this point it was evident to the writer that reading retardation was just one exemplification of a complete lack of confidence. Something had to be done to restore it. After a few meetings during which Mrs. X. was encouraged to talk about herself, the writer induced her to take a "short and enjoyable test." With adequate praise and reassurance, the Wechsler Bellevue Intelligence Test was given without the subject demonstrating any emotional instability. Evaluation revealed an intelligence quotient of 135 for the full scale. Mrs. X. was informed of her achievement and told that the test proved conclusively that she had the ability to handle college work and need have no fear of any testing situation. A few additional interviews followed. When Mrs. X.'s self-confidence seemed fully restored, she was given the Minnesota Reading Tests. Scores for speed, vocabulary, and comprehension all exceeded the eightieth percentile. Mrs. X. no longer was a disabled reader.

Informal and standardized tests showed that Mr. M. was an accurate but extremely slow reader. Rate of comprehension scores ran consistently between 170 and 180 words per minute for all kinds of materials. No visual, auditory, mental, or emotional factors seemed related to his retardation. Through an interview with Mr. M., however, the writer learned that he had studied law for several years. His professors had stressed, at all times, the importance of slow, detailed reading. Here was a possible answer! It was apparent that this kind of reading over a long period of time could have brought about a habituation to a slow rate of reading. With this in mind, remediation centered around Mr. M.'s reading easy materials under the pressure of time. Supplementary training involved tachistoscopic phrase and sentence drill. The re-

sults were most gratifying. Within a few weeks (a summer session was involved) Mr. M. had more than doubled his reading speed without any loss in comprehension.

A forty-six-year-old woman, Mrs. T., read slowly and inefficiently. She suffered from intermittent headaches and reported a "tendency for letters to run together at times." A syndrome of visual difficulty seemed evident. The Keystone Visual Survey Tests showed that Mrs. T. was decidedly farsighted. A plus lens test with the Snellen Chart indicated that her hyperopia undoubtedly was interfering with reading. She was told to visit a specialist immediately. But Mrs. T. appeared day after day without glasses. When questioned, she admitted visiting no specialist because "he might want me to wear glasses, and they would make me look old." The writer argued and pleaded. A few weeks before the term ended Mrs. T. began to wear glasses. Her oculist had diagnosed the condition as presbyopia (farsightedness due to an age factor). Relief was immediate. Mrs. T.'s headaches disappeared and reading became enjoyable. Improvement was sufficient to enable Mrs. T. to meet the reading standards set up by the college for admission to directed teaching.

These cases serve to show the importance of uncovering and dealing directly with the causes of reading retardation. The indiscriminate use of techniques and devices hardly ever achieves gratifying results and can in some instances do definite harm. In Mrs. X.'s case, for example, an emphasis on increased reading speed and comprehension would have only intensified her lack of self-confidence. Without glasses, Mrs. T. could experience only more frequent headaches and discomfort from reading drill.

When proper diagnosis precedes prescription, the remedy most always is effective. Applying techniques indiscriminately puts a teacher professionally in the bracket of a physician in the dark ages where the patient was bled for any and all symptoms of illness.

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PATTERN IN *LORD JIM*: ONE JUMP AFTER ANOTHER

A pattern is a design built up by repetition (usually repetition with variation) which lends unity to a work of art. Pattern in dominant image may be seen in Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. This image or symbol, which recurs throughout the book, is an uncommon one—a man who jumps.

In the first few pages of the novel the romantic hero's fate is foreshadowed when, in an urgent moment, he dramatically refrains from jumping. On the training ship Jim is not quick enough to leap into the rescue boat that is being lowered (p. 8):

"Too late, youngster." The captain of the ship laid a restraining hand on that boy, who seemed on the point of leaping overboard. . . . "Better luck next time. This will teach you to be smart."

The most tragic jump of Jim's life is, of course, the impulsive leap over the side of the *Patna*, the overloaded pilgrim ship of which he is chief mate, when it seems certain that the vessel is on the point of plummeting to the bottom. This is the act which he can never cancel, although the rest of his life is passed in trying to expiate it. These lines come as the climax of the *Patna* episode (p. 111):

"I had jumped. . . ." He checked himself, averted his gaze. . . . "It seems," he added. . . .

"I wished I could die," he cried. "There was no going back. It was as if I had jumped into a well—into an everlasting deep hole."

Jim attempts to justify himself later. Anybody would have jumped in his place (p. 106).

Jim's judge at the trial, Captain Brierly, is given a good deal of attention in the novel. Brierly, outwardly a paragon of all that is best in the code of the sea, is secretly eaten by doubts, which lead him, almost inexplicably, to commit suicide a short time after he has judged Jim. Not impulsively, but with

almost painful premeditation, he jumps overboard. Remarks Marlow (p. 58):

"While I thought with something akin to fear of the immensity of his contempt for the young man under examination, he was probably holding silent inquiry into his own case. The verdict must have been of unmitigated guilt, and he took the secret of the evidence with him in that leap into the sea."

Stein, the wise merchant, who gives the best diagnosis of Jim—"He is romantic"—and who gives him the chance to expiate his failure, gives also the best statement of Conrad's idea of how to survive in this world. This statement is made in terms of plunging into the sea and making the sea support one (p. 213):

"A man that is born falls into a dream like a man who falls into the sea. If he tries to climb out into the air as inexperienced people endeavour to do, he drowns—*nicht wahr?* . . . No! I tell you! The way is to the destructive element submit yourself, and with the exertions of your hands and feet in the water make the deep, deep sea keep you up."

The image of descending with a leap from above is repeated three times on a single page, dealing with Jim's appearance in Patusan (p. 229):

Had they not seen him come up in a canoe they might have thought he had descended upon them from the clouds. . . . Strange, this fatality that would cast the complexion of a flight upon all his acts, of impulsive unreflecting desertion—of a jump into the unknown.

It is precisely the casualness of it that strikes me most. Neither Stein nor I had a clear conception of what might be on the other side when we, metaphorically speaking, took him up and hove him over the wall with scant ceremony.

Jim lands on the wrong side upon his arrival in Patusan. Held prisoner by the evil Rajah Allang, Jim changes sides by courageously making a desperate jump—in fact, two jumps (p. 251):

Then showing me a place on the north front of the stockade where the pointed tops of

* All quotations from *Lord Jim* are taken from the standard American edition (pagination is the same in the Modern Library reprint).

several stakes were broken, "This is where I leaped over on my third day in Patusan. They haven't put new stakes there yet. Good leap, eh?" A moment later we passed the mouth of a muddy creek. "This is my second leap. I had a bit of a run and took this one flying, but fell short. Thought I would leave my skin there."

During Jim's precarious peacemaking career in Patusan he is set upon at night by four assassins. Warned by Jewel, he shoots one man, and the other three surrender. He drives them to the riverbank (p. 303): "Take my greetings to Sherif Ali—till I come myself," said Jim. Not one head of the three budged. "Jump!" he thundered.

The dramatic parley between Jim and "Gentleman" Brown—another renegade from the iron code of the sea—again echoes the dominant symbol (pp. 379-83):

Brown jumped up on the log. . . . Then Brown jumped off and went down to meet him on his side.

They met, I should think, not very far from the place, perhaps on the very spot, where Jim took the second desperate leap of his life—the leap that landed him into the life of Patusan, into the trust, the love, the confidence of the people.

Brown, who "had a satanic gift of finding out the best and the weakest spot in his victims," thrusts at Jim's soul when this sea-raider says in desperation:

"This is as good a jumping-off place for me as another. I am sick of my infernal luck. But it would be too easy. There are my men in the same boat—and, by God, I am not the sort to jump out of trouble and leave them in a d—d lurch."

A few pages from the end of the novel the treachery of Brown in shooting Doramin's son brings Jim's task to an end (p. 408):

Then Jim understood. He had retreated from one world, for a small matter of an impulsive jump, and now the other, the work of his own hands, had fallen in ruins upon his head.

Deliberately, Jim faces Doramin's pistol and makes the last great leap of his life, into the unknowable.

The symbol of the jump, then, is found in many critical spots throughout *Lord Jim*, from first to last. What might be the value of such a dominant image?

The value should lie within the congruous world of the novel itself. Analysis will show that the image not only unifies the work but also harmonizes with the theme (that romantic idealism dooms one to tragedy), with the characterization of the impulsive hero, with the plot, with the main conflicts, and with the suspense aroused concerning the outcome. Part of the ironic meaning of the story is involved in the symbolism of the jumps. In particular, the structure of the book is saltatory; Conrad's story seems to be leaping back and forth in space and time. The focus of narration likewise shifts, from omniscient author to Marlow to quoted document and back again. Finally, the "philosophy" of this novel is best expressed in Stein's words quoted previously, in which the main image is that of a plunge into the sea.

Did Conrad deliberately weave into his tale this dominant symbol—a man who jumps—or did it arise from unconscious artistry? An examination into Conrad's life at the time he was writing this novel may give a clue. Significantly, Joseph Conrad himself had made several leaps in his own life which might have seemed impulsive and irremediable at the moment. Born far away from sight of the sea, the lad determined to be a sailor and won his wish. Later he forsook his dream of a revived Polish nation and became a British subject. More adept in French than in English, he decided one day to write his fiction in the English language. A master-mariner at last, he moved ashore, cut loose from his seafaring career, acquired a family, and embraced the *métier de chien*, the desperate attempt to make a living by his pen. To the destructive element submit yourself! When he was writing *Lord Jim* in 1900, Conrad knew he had made a leap from which there was no turning back.

A. GROVE DAY

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Current English Forum

HAROLD B. ALLEN, ADELINE C. BARTLETT, MARGARET M. BRYANT (chairman),
ARCHIBALD A. HILL, JAMES B. MCMILLAN, KEMP MALONE, RUSSELL THOMAS

HAD OUGHT

In many handbooks you will find, among the expressions to avoid, *had ought* (*hadn't ought*). Long had I seen the expression in such lists before I ever heard it. The person that I first heard use it was from the state of Ohio and was a principal of a large high school in West Virginia. To him it was the natural way of expressing a certain sense of obligation. His remark on seeing someone he felt that he should have met at the train was: "I had ought to have met you." Since that time I have heard the combination often, especially in New York.

You will observe that more than time is expressed in the verb of the principal's sentence above. In addition to referring to the past, he also expresses a sense of duty or moral obligation. He had neglected to meet the person at the train an hour earlier. In verbs other aspects of thought may be found besides time. In fact, tense may be defined broadly as a change in a verb form to express time, obligation, permission, compulsion, ability, habit, fulfilment, condition, or some other aspect of thought. In this expression you find two aspects of thought: time and moral obligation.

The history of the verb *ought* is helpful in understanding the development of *had ought*. There seems to be a tendency in the English language to bring past time up to the present. That is, verbs originally past in tense take on a present meaning and develop new extensions of form—infinitives, participles, etc. They are known as "past-present verbs." This tendency is especially apparent in auxiliary verbs. In Old English five of these verbs had developed presents from earlier pasts: *ought*, *can*, *may*, *must*, and *shall*. You will observe that

these verbs omit the inflection in the third person singular present tense (he *ought*, not he *oughts*, etc.) like forms of the past tense rather than the present. Other verbs which have become past-presents since the Old English period are *could*, *might*, *should*, and *would*.

It is interesting to note that *ought* is doubly past-present. *Ought* is derived from the Old English verb *āgan*, meaning "to owe," which was a past tense that had acquired at that time a present meaning. The original strong past *āh* became present in meaning and developed a new weak past *āhte*. It is this past *āhte* ("ought") which has now become present in its meaning, as in "You *ought* to write him a letter."

A curious feature of *ought* in present-day English is that it has no other derived forms. *Ought* is not only defective, lacking the usual forms of conjugation, but it is actually a verb of threefold time. It may express past ("Though he understood he *ought* to write, he did not"), present ("You *ought* to be in class this minute"), or future ("Next week is the time when you *ought* to appear").

The fact that there is only one form probably accounts for the introduction of *had* before *ought*. *Ought* from *āhte* (a past) is now thought of as present, and there are those who are trying to express the past by introducing *had* before it, as in "I *had ought* to have come," or "I *hadn't ought* to have come." In questions there may be a feeling of awkwardness in saying "*Oughtn't* I, he, she, you, they?" Professor G. P. Krapp in his *Comprehensive Guide to Good English* points out that "I *oughtn't* to have done that, had I?" is often heard. The question after the statement, then, is "Had I *ought* to have done that?"

The *Oxford Dictionary* shows that *ought* is historically the past of *owe* and that the past participle *ought* was formerly in literary use when the meaning was "owed" and "possessed," from which the meaning "to be under obligation" developed. The citation is from Coverdale 2., *Macc.* 12:3 (1535), "As though they *had ought* them no euell wyll," meaning "As though they had owed them no evil will." At this time *ought* was used both in the past tense form and as the past participle. It is this old use which still continues in *had ought* and *hadn't ought*. The *OED* cites a quotation from the Nova Scotian Haliburton's *Clock-maker* (1836): "It don't seem to me that I *had ought* to be made a fool on in that book" and from Rosemary's *Chilterns* (1895): "Rose *had ought* to get married." Other examples may be found in such writers as R. L. Stevenson ("You *had ought* to tell me that" from *Treasure Island*), Arnold Bennett ("His friends *hadn't ought* to let him out like this," from *Clayhanger*), John Masefield, and Sinclair Lewis, where it is very common, for it is used much more in American usage ("We've all done a bunch of things that we *hadn't ought* to" from *Babbitt*; "I *hadn't ought* to talk" from *Main Street*; "I don't think a fellow that can't get through an examination *had hardly ought* to be allowed to practice medicine" and "He *hadn't ought* to be getting drunk" from *Martin Arrowsmith*).

One cyclopedia of correct English usage states that *had ought* is nonexistent but warns against using it. It is far from being nonexistent, and in some sections the combination is often heard. However, except in dialogue, present-day written English does not employ *ought* as a participle.

Since this usage seems to be gaining ground in spoken English, it may in the future establish itself. Professors Marckwardt and Cassidy in *Scribner Handbook of English* (2d ed.) cautiously and wisely write: "*Had ought*, the affirmative, is probably a provincialism, but because of the American hesitation to use *oughtn't*, it is quite possible that the negative *hadn't ought* is common colloquially." One who wishes to avoid all criticism in speech or writing substitutes *should* or just *ought*. Say "I *should have written*" or "I *ought to have written*" instead of "I *had ought to have written*" and "I *shouldn't have written*" or "I *ought not to have written*" in place of "I *hadn't ought to have written*."

As a last word, why should Americans hesitate to use *oughtn't*? I see nothing wrong with "I *oughtn't* to go." Americans say "I *can't go*," "I *won't go*," "I *shouldn't go*," etc. Why not "I *oughtn't to go*?" It is preferable to "I *hadn't ought to go*."

MARGARET M. BRYANT

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Ten-Line English Grammar

A sentence is when you have said what you mean;
 Clauses can't stand, and phrases are graces.
 A noun is an anchor-post, pronouns will serve;
 Adjectives flutter like streamers about them.
 Prepositions are guy-lines; conjunctions are hawsers;
 Interjections are birds, and adverbs are sticky.
 A verb is a word that can ing; it spawns;
 Sometimes it adjectives, sometimes it nouns.
 And idioms are gypsies who live as they please—
 The law is distressed: you are what you do.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

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Report and Summary

THE FEBRUARY ISSUE OF *POETRY* should be not only of interest but also of direct use to all college teachers of poetry. A preliminary editorial note by Karl Shapiro states that, of the thirty thousand or so verse manuscripts sent yearly to that magazine during the last two years, "the majority—and the best of them—originate in schools where the craft of writing is taught and where the teachers are poets. Undoubtedly the teaching of writing as an art is a major development in American education and one which may, for better or for worse, influence the whole future of American letters." A major portion of this issue presents the work of students from the Iowa Workshop, under the direction of Paul Engle, and the University of Washington Workshop, headed by Theodore Roethke. Each of these two poets also contributes a short essay, Roethke on "The Teaching Poet," Engle on "Poet and Professor Overture." Roethke discusses various teaching procedures. He thinks the main significance of a course in verse-writing is the fact that thinking is directed toward synthesis, toward building up, toward creating, whereas most college courses are directed toward analysis, a breaking down. The lyric, particularly the short lyric, he considers a good teaching instrument. His scheme is for every student to pursue his own bent, to write the poems he wants to—and also to do at least some set exercises as a discipline. He constantly reminds students that poetry is a classic art and requires that its exponents read intensively in all literatures. To this end he has a classroom library to which they can all immediately refer in the course of class discussion. He admits that he is inclined to be rough on the student who wants a mentor ("you can't carry their spiritual burdens"), and he insists that the teaching

poet preserve his identity. Engle is still surprised "to find a University disposed to look at a poet as an honest man" and thinks that poets are at colleges "in the effort to affect not simply the old concerns of study, things factual and speculative, but things imaginative as well." This, he says, has not happened in the world's history before and may be the one unique quality America contributes to education. A third essay, by G. D. Bridson, describes the increased audience for poetry which British radio performances have stimulated. He discusses particularly the B.B.C.'s Third Programme, on which for five years poems have been presented ranging from *Piers Plowman* to the present day. Its most notable successes have been with long narrative poems. He reports that Neville Coghill recently completed his modernizations of *The Canterbury Tales*, "which have now been heard and enthusiastically enjoyed by millions of British listeners." A two-hour performance of Scott's *Marmion* was recently greeted with equal acclaim; and there have been outstanding performances of Byron's *Beppo*, Browning's *Mr. Sludge the Medium* and James Lee's *Wife*, a selection of Landor's *Hellenics*, Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market*, Hopkins' *Wreck of the Deutschland*, and Pound's *Homage to Sextus Propertius*. For the Festival of Britain the Third Programme commissioned a new translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* from C. D. Lewis, readings from which are being heard this winter. Bridson believes there is every reason to suppose that today's increasing habit of listening to poetry may have radical effects upon the poetical forms and traditions of the future.

THE *SATURDAY REVIEW*'S ANNUAL survey of new writers appears in its issue of

February 16. In "Prose of Promise," Harrison Smith states that, out of more than a hundred books by writers who had never before had a volume of fiction published in the United States, the editors of the *Saturday Review* could find only seven novels and one collection of short stories "meriting an accolade for either achievement or high promise." Of these, five are the work of Americans: *From Here to Eternity* by James Jones; *Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger; *Lie Down in Darkness* by William Styron; *The Season of the Stranger* by Stephen Becker; and *The Absence of Angels*, fifteen short stories, by Hortense Calisher. The three others are: *The Steam Packet* by the Most Reverend David Mathew, Titular Archbishop of Apamea and Apostolic Delegate in Africa, an Englishman; *The Plunderers* (translated from the French) by George Blond; and *Ti-Coyo and His Shark* (translated from the French) by Clément Richer. Smith discusses each of these in some detail. A symposium on "Life on 1952's Grub Street" is included in the same issue. Gorham Munson writes on "The Condition of the Author," Fletcher Pratt on "The Double Life of a Book Author," and Alan C. Collins on "On Improving the Lot of Authors."

TEACHERS OF WORLD LITERATURE in particular will be interested in the biographical memoir of the French poet Paul Valéry in the February *Atlantic*, in the critical essay, "G. G. Belli—Roman Poet" by Eleanor Clark in the winter *Kenyon Review*, and in the winter issue of the *Pacific Spectator*, which includes essays on "The Soviet Literary Front" by Anatole G. Mazour and on "Themes and Variations in Brazilian Culture" by Bernard J. Siegel. Last fall the *Pacific Spectator* inaugurated a new department, "Literature from Asia," with the purpose of presenting carefully selected samples of various Asian literatures with discussions by Asians "equipped to speak from within." The new department contains essays, poetry, and short stories and has been prompted by what the editors

term "a need for a free interchange or a fresh cross-fertilization of American ideas with other strains." Any such literary study, of course, raises sweeping questions, and in the autumn issue Wallace Stegner, just returned from Asia, discusses a number of them in his introductory essay, "Out of Asia." He points out that a great many of Asia's languages are in a state which might be called pre-Chaucerian, still mixing and forming and taking shape, that the majority of Asians are illiterate, that the political situation is such that any Asian intellectual is subject either to split loyalties or to intense partisanship which leads to the writing of political pamphlets, that if he doesn't participate in political journalism he is almost forced to retreat from the native and local into some international or historical vacuum. Among many other interesting facts, Mr. Stegner points out that India makes more movies than any other nation except the United States, that Japan is a nation of readers, and that Japan has the most prolific publishing business in the world, which annually puts out twice as much as American publishers produce. He concludes by observing that, though American literature is not so well known as it ought to be, it is better known among the educated of every country in Asia than the literature of that country is known in America. What both of us need, he says, is a greatly increased flow of information. In the winter issue of *Pacific Spectator* this new department is devoted to a discussion of literary trends in Bengal.

THE FACT THAT ENGLISH POETS and dramatists instinctively regard Shakespeare as a rival is the reason that so many of them have tried to revive the poetic drama. So thinks Stephen Spender, himself a poet, who writes on "Modern Poetic Drama" for the January *Britain Today*. The experiments in this art form during the two hundred and fifty years before 1930, he also thinks, can be summed up as a collection of interesting failures, and, although he makes no rash claims for the

genius of Eliot, Auden, and Fry, he does think that today there is more understanding of the problems of the poetic drama than at any time since the eighteenth century. The two principles which the contemporary triumvirate seem to understand which previous poets have ignored are that poetry on the stage must be entertaining in terms of the contemporary theater (if Shakespeare were writing today, his plays would be different, because he understood this) and that every line of poetry must have dramatic relevance to plot and characterization. A third prerequisite, however, has only been imperfectly understood, says Spender. This is the fact that contemporary audiences expect the characters in plays to be rather complex. It is this lack which is the weakness of *The Cocktail Party* and *The Lady's Not for Burning*. The most important result of the recent experiments in poetic drama, Spender believes, has been the starting of a lively debate about the function of language in drama. This has drawn attention to the extreme impoverishment in most contemporary plays, "a poverty so great that the contemporary West End and Broadway play is as a general rule unreadable from its inception and unactable five years after its first appearance." How successful the poetic experiments will be in enriching the drama only time will tell, but Spender thinks they are more worth continuing than anything else in the English theater today.

IN THE JANUARY *IRISH DIGEST* Roger McHugh reports an interview with Larus Sigurbjornsson, a director of the Icelandic Theater Society and a librarian of the Icelandic National Theater. It appears that the little country at the top of the world has a very modern National Theater equipped with a revolving stage, a small theater used for experimental productions, excellent dressing-rooms, and proper workshops and storage space. It was built out of state funds provided by the entertainment tax and has an annual subsidy of about £40,000. Community centers, each

with its own little theater, have also been built throughout Iceland out of the entertainment tax, and by law the National Theater must send out troupes annually to play in such theaters. There is also a Drama League of all amateur theater companies, which co-operates with the National Theater. Result: the theater is booming in Iceland. Perhaps an educational polar expedition undertaken by those concerned with the *rigor mortis* now settling upon the American theater might prove as stimulating as experiments with the poetic drama.

"JAMES JOYCE AND THE CINEMA," by Patricia Hutchins, also appears in the January *Irish Digest*. As early as 1909 Joyce was exhibiting Italian films in Dublin and throughout his life was interested in the development of the moving picture as an art form. Miss Hutchins discusses several instances in which his interest in film techniques is reflected in his writings.

STANISLAUS JOYCE, THE BROTHER of James, contributes some revealing biographical details of Joyce's early life in the January *Partisan Review*. His article, entitled "Joyce's Dublin," was originally written as a review of Patricia Hutchins' book of that name, but the review was refused publication in Ireland.

"THE BUSINESS MAN AS READER" comprises an iconoclastic section of a symposium on "The Business Man in America" which forms the major portion of the January 19 issue of the *Saturday Review* (which has significantly dropped the "*of Literature*" from its title). The Research Institute of America, which planned and edited the symposium, took a poll of the reading habits of a cross-section of more than fifteen thousand officers and executives of United States corporations. The results shatter pretty effectively the old stereotype of the business tycoon who owns a handsome library of unread books. The poll disclosed that 55 per cent of the executives polled read more than ten books a

year, 19 per cent read over twenty-five, and 7 per cent read over fifty. Only 4 per cent admit to reading none. The diversity of taste in reading matter showed almost as broad a range of interests as books published. The first five of the twenty-five leading titles in the RIA poll were *Kon-Tiki*, *The Forrestal Diaries*, *The Caine Mutiny*, *The Sea around Us*, and *Closing the Ring*. One wonders how much the book clubs influenced their choices, since 58 per cent of those questioned reported membership in a book club.

"The Writer and the Entrepreneur," by Leo Cherne, in the same symposium discusses how two generations of American writers have helped to shape America's view of its businessmen. Cherne points out that there has been a big change in the character of businessmen who have sat for their portraits since the early Upton Sinclair novels and *Babbitt*. However, he thinks that there is too long a time lag between the changes which have taken place in business and what many authors know of actual conditions. Today, Cherne says, there are thousands of executives whose youth was spent studying Marx, Ricardo, and Keynes in colleges and schools of business administration who are not afraid of books and who at least have firsthand knowledge of the ideas and doctrines with which their times have to deal. All of which would seem to indicate that *Babbitt* has finally grown up.

EDGAR ALLAN POE'S "NARRATIVE of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket" is analyzed by Patrick F. Quinn in the winter *Hudson Review* to show its effect upon the writings of Herman Melville and the poetry of Rimbaud. The poet Robert Graves also contributes to the same magazine, under the title of "Mother Goose's Lost Goslings," a pleasant essay on the sources and effect of oral tradition upon some of the nursery rhymes with which we are all familiar.

TWO THOUGHT-PROVOKING ESSAYS on Shakespeare appear in the winter *Ken-*

yon Review. From Peking University, William Empson (who is to be at the Indiana School of Letters this summer) discusses "Dover Wilson on *Macbeth*." Wilson has argued for an early revision of *Macbeth* by Shakespeare himself—a revision designed to shorten it for a court performance. Empson examines Wilson's specific proposals as to what Shakespeare cut and argues against them, showing that if Shakespeare did what Wilson suggests, he wouldn't be a capable dramatist!

In a second article, "Philosophy and Theatre in *Measure for Measure*," Francis Fergusson shows why he thinks *Measure for Measure* is to be understood as both philosophy and poetry of the theater and points out that these are "cognate modes of presenting a single underlying vision of man in society." The matter of the play's philosophy is "the nature of our people and our city's institutions," as the Duke puts it, but Fergusson thinks that, in the mirror of the Duke's "Vienna" and in the light of the Greek-Christian tradition, the play reveals the actual drama of government in Shakespeare's own city. He believes that Shakespeare isn't solving a problem, that he has no thesis, but that what he is doing is "setting forth, from many points of view, an ineluctable mystery in human affairs."

STUDENTS OF WORLD LITERATURE will be interested in the long "letter" about contemporary Italian poetry written by Alessandro Pellegrini for the autumn *Sewanee Review*. Those poets who he thinks have contributed most significantly to contemporary literature are Cardarelli, Ungaretti, Montale, Quasimodo, Valeri, Solmi, Sereni, and Gatto. He discusses their work in detail and gives English translations of some of the most characteristic poems of each. The same subject is discussed more briefly by Edward Williamson in the December and January issues of *Poetry*.

PAUL BUNYAN IS NO TRUE FOLK hero but grew in the fertile brain of an advertising man employed by the Red River

Lumber Company. This is the burden of Marshall W. Fishwick's "Paul Bunyan: The Folk Hero as Tycoon," in the winter *Yale Review*. There were a few authentic tales recorded in the Middle West between 1910 and 1916, but they were meager and in language fully understood only by old lumbermen. The hero of these stories he calls "Paul Bunyan I." "Paul Bunyan II" was born when William B. Langhead was employed by the Red River Lumber Company, which was moving from exhausted lands in Minnesota to fresh forests in California. Langhead had worked for eight years in lumber camps, from chore boy to construction engineer, before he turned free-lance advertiser. He had heard some of the stories, but in the thirty-two-page pamphlet he presently issued they had suffered an important change. For all this, Mr. Fishwick cites apparently sound evidence. He agrees that Paul Bunyan II met the desires of others than lumbermen for a folk hero, but he insists that his main lineaments were chiseled by Langhead and James Stevens, who was director of public relations for the West Coast Lumbermen's Association when he first learned of Langhead's successful stories. J. Frank Dobie, Carleton C. Ames, Mrs. Grace S. McClure, and others have attached the Bunyan myth,

and Fishwick thinks that anyone can see that stories without technical terms and profanity never develop in the bunkhouses. We should know all this, if Mr. Fishwick is right, but if a literary ballad may be good, why not also a literary tall tale?

SYMBOLISM CARRIED TOO FAR creates at most lifeless parable; still the writer who concerns himself solely with swaths of fact creates only case histories. Where is the middle channel? John F. McGlynn in an essay, "The Two Faces of Fiction," in *Four Quarters*, champions the fusing of naturalism and romance to produce "some of the finest works of the imagination": *The Gallery*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *The Track of the Cat*.

FURIOSO MAGAZINE AND ITS PUBLISHER, Alfred Knopf, awarded its short-story prize to William Berge, who is studying for his Master's degree at the University of Iowa. The judges noted that one-third of the contributions were chapters from novels in progress and that many of the best came from young men in university creative-writing programs, particularly from the University of Iowa. The state of California had the most contributors.

About Education

LOOK MAGAZINE (JANUARY 29) DEVOTES a full-length article by Dan Fowler to "What the Loyalty Oath Did to the University of California." This is an excellent résumé of what happened. Fowler points out that the oath actually was born not to combat communism but to protect the university's source of revenue, that those in favor of it "labored like a mountain to produce two tiny mice, a Communist piano player and a part time teaching assistant," that it was opposed by those who believed that keeping the university free of Reds was the faculty's job and not the regents', that the appeals court which declared the oath unconstitutional has ordered re-instatement of the nonsigners, and that the

November, 1951, meeting of the Board of Regents finally rescinded it officially. During the fight the university lost a great deal of prestige, but academic tenure now seems secure. A heartening sign that the court which held the regents' oath invalid recognized its inherent danger is evident from its declaration: "We are keenly aware that, equal to the danger of subversion from within by force and violence, is the danger of subversion from within by the gradual whittling away and the resulting disintegration of the very pillars of our freedom."

THAT MANY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS do not understand the dangers which come from "censorship" is apparent from

a recent Purdue University poll also reported in *Look*. The poll covered 16,800 students in more than 100 schools in 35 states. Dr. H. H. Remmers, head of the Purdue division of educational research, calls the answers "frightening." He does not give the exact questions which were asked but says that 60 per cent approved police bans on books and movies, 58 per cent condoned police "third-degree" methods, 55 per cent approved press censorship, 59 per cent thought large masses of people aren't capable of deciding what's good for them, and 26 per cent approved police searches without warrants.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY HAS ESTABLISHED a research fellowship for the study of teaching English to high school students who do not intend to go to college. Recipients will attempt to devise several different types of practical teaching plans which could be used immediately or easily modified by the classroom teacher.

DOES THE PRESENT RELATIVELY high drop-out rate of adult students in liberal arts courses indicate that the courses provided for adults are not always suited to adult interests? The question has intrigued the directors of the Fund for Adult Education, an affiliate of the Ford Foundation, and prompted them to grant \$160,000 to the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, recently established in Chicago. Thirty-one colleges throughout the country soon will be offering evening courses without prerequisites on mature subjects such as "World Politics," "The American Tradition," "Analytical Reading," "Group Living: Its Influence on Attitudes and Behavior." Three test universities began courses in February. An analysis of the results is expected in November.

C. C. FRIES PROTESTS SHARPLY THE *Detroit Free Press* report of an interview he gave a reporter. NCTE audiences know how orderly and meticulous Fries always is in his statements. In sum he told the reporter:

"The linguistic scientist tries to describe and analyze all the varieties of languages, exactly as they are. He finds in his investigations that the practices of those who speak what is called a single language may differ rather widely. These differences he tries to understand. He finds that some differences are distributed geographically, that others are social class differences within the same geographical area. He finds that certain forms have considerable prestige as compared with alternate forms for practically the same meaning. As a linguistic scientist it is his business not only to gather all the expressions by which a people communicate and carry on their affairs, but also to note precisely their distributions and differences in prestige. Some of this work is reported in the following: the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States* (three volumes covering New England published), Kurath's *Word Geography in the United States*, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, Jespersen's *Modern English Grammar*."

He went on to explain the evidence in his own *American English Grammar* that many of the traditional and conventional rules taught in schools do not now represent, and never really have represented, the practices of Standard English. He remarked that many of the forms used by the uneducated are not mistakes derived from Standard English by carelessness but remnants of older patterns discarded in the evolution of our language.

The *Free Press* headlines were: "Grammar? It Ain't Gotta Be Perfect; U-M Prof Defends Us as Says 'It's Me,' 'None Are,' 'Lay Down.'" The story began: "Don't cramp your English-speaking style. Let yourself go grammatically. If a word or sentence seems right and proper to you, go ahead and say it." And so on.

If the newspapers distort other news half as badly as they misrepresent practically every statement by a scholar about language, we are hopelessly misinformed about social and political situations and proposals. No responsible linguist fails to differentiate Standard English from substandard, popular, or vulgar English. In

general, the more one has studied the actual usage of "educated," socially accepted persons, the more usages proscribed by the handbooks he accepts as permissible (not prescriptive) forms, but he agrees more than disagrees with his conventional colleagues who write the handbooks.

That Standard English includes both formal and colloquial varieties is unmistakably clear. Whether teachers should insist that classroom speaking and writing shall always be of the formal variety should be—but rarely is—discussed on psychological and sociological grounds.

AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY the faculty of the College of Education adopted the following statement: "Our public schools are free schools maintained by a free people. In totalitarian lands the situation is markedly different. There the groups in power expect to remain in power forever. They create schools, therefore, which will teach as truth the doctrines and opinions of those who control the government. In our country, no group is in power permanently, whether at the national, state, or local level. Grants of power are periodically reconsidered by the whole people and renewed or withdrawn at the people's pleasure.

"The fact that the public schools of America are free schools places upon them distinctive responsibilities. They were created by determined people experienced in the ways of freedom. Such people know that the battle for freedom is a continuing one. They know that freedom, difficult to gain, is easily lost. They want to be heard on all important issues. They should be heard; and, in America, they will be heard. But no group can properly insist that its doctrines or opinions be imposed upon the young in the American school."

TEN YEARS AGO THE NEA SET up the Defense Commission to combat the growing attacks on schools, poor conditions under which teachers worked, and the poor salaries they were paid. Today the inventory shows success in almost every

endeavor: the struggle for teachers' political and civil rights; the clarification of lines of school administration; the raising of professional standards; the support of a welfare fund for teachers. These are only a few of the commission's triumphs. It figured in the Pasadena incident, the Grand Prairie (Texas) and Mars Hill (North Carolina) troubles, and in Chicago. The decade has been full for the commission. All teachers owe it much.

TWENTY-SEVEN COLLEGES AND universities have scheduled summer workshops for teachers of English at junior and senior high school levels, according to a recent survey made by the *English Journal*, the April issue of which carries a directory of these workshops.

TEACHERS WHO BECOME IMPATIENT with student stupidity should read Gertrude H. Gersten's experience story, "Refresher Course," in the January *High Points*. Well trained academically, she took an evening course in sewing on her newly purchased machine. Her repeated bewilderment, even when she thought while listening that she understood an explanation, made her much more sympathetic with students who found the next day that they did not understand (or remember?) what she had carefully explained—about much more subtle matters than sewing patterns.

A BASIC VOCABULARY OF FIVE hundred words is being taught to New York City Puerto Ricans through the use of audio-visual aids. The system, developed largely by Professor I. A. Richards and Miss Christine Gibson of the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, emphasizes use of everyday words and situations. Their need for a quick, workable use of the English was realized when it was discovered that they swelled the city's relief rolls by being unable to take jobs where English is required. Richards has put on the market in the last few years pocket books teaching French and Spanish through pictures.

New Books

College Teaching Materials

THOUGHT AND EXPERIENCE IN PROSE. Edited by CRAIG R. THOMPSON and JOHN HICKS. Oxford University Press. Pp. 661.

PREFACE TO CRITICAL READING. Rev. ed. By RICHARD D. ALTICK. Holt. Pp. 359.

These texts are examples of two divergent trends in the move to teach freshmen how to read. Professors Thompson and Hicks, wishing, as they say, "not to come between the student and the instructor," admirably select fifty-four pieces of fairly difficult prose. They supply only one page of questions for every fifteen pages of text and rely on the teacher to do his own explaining. On the other hand, Professor Altick, while including many short extracts and exercises built around them, writes his own book and explains lucidly and thoroughly what he expects the student to do.

The value of the Thompson-Hicks text, then, lies in the readings selected. This collection is fresh, varied, and stimulating, ranging from the Bible (the story of Joseph) to Thurber, from Lord Chesterfield to Whitehead. Intentionally tough, the pieces are guaranteed to force the teacher as well as the students to do some thinking. The book is adapted for the above-average freshman who has an ample vocabulary and a taste for ideas. The teacher who uses it accepts a responsibility to "widen the student's intellectual horizon" as well as to help him understand ordinary print.

The Altick text contains a persuasive gospel of the precise meaning of words, the worth of logic, and the inner values of literature. It warns effectively against jargon, journalesque, clichés, and emotional rhetoric. (When is the NAM going to discover what we English teachers do to sabotage advertising?) It is a usable introduction to literature and literary values as well as a text on reading. Its place is somewhere between the theme routine of the freshman and the literature course of the sophomore, filling in the gap in continuity that worries every instructor. If only students could be made to read

it, a teacher would find much of his own classroom chatter needless. Without making any pretension, it is as sensitive and sane a preface to poetry as it is a guide to clear, critical thought.

A. M. BUCHAN

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THE HERITAGE OF AMERICAN LITERATURE. Edited by LYON N. RICHARDSON, GEORGE H. ORIAN, and HERBERT R. BROWN. Ginn. 2 vols. Pp. 966 and 856. \$5.00 per volume.

Here is another good text for the undergraduate course in American literature, beginning with the early explorers and ending with the last Romantics in the first semester; beginning with folklore and ballads and ending with contemporary fiction in the second semester. The two volumes are substantially made and clearly printed. There are some footnotes, not too many. A brief headnote for each selection gives information on composition and publication. Introductory essays on the periods and individual authors are informative rather than interpretative, brief but adequate. One of the best features of the work is the excellent selective bibliographies accompanying these introductions. There is also in each volume a chronology of events from 1603 to 1950, with literature parallel to social and political history. Each volume contains a bibliography of selected readings in American culture, with subject divisions including fine arts, intellectual and social history, political history, economics and sociology, education, philosophy, and religion. There are indexes of authors and titles and of first lines of poems.

The selection is strong in historical, background, and supplementary materials. Volume I contains no play, and Volume II only one, *Anna Christie*. About three hundred pages are devoted to colonial, revolutionary, and nationalistic writers; about six hundred to the nineteenth-century Romantics from Irving to La-

nier. In Volume II there are about thirty pages of folk songs and ballads with music. Proportion leans toward western, regional, and folk selections. There are about a hundred pages of regional story-tellers, about a hundred of humor and folklore, about fifty of Whitman's poetry.

Reasonable balance is kept between excerpts and whole works. There are selections from *Spoon River Anthology*, *The Gilded Age*, *Through the Eye of the Needle*, *Life on the Mississippi*; no novel-length work is printed entire. "Song of Myself" is cut with discrimination. Good proportion is maintained between standard selections and innovations, although some of us will mourn the omission of personal favorites.

MARTIN STAPLES SHOCKLEY

NORTH TEXAS STATE COLLEGE

AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN ENGLISH LITERARY HISTORY. By CHAUNCEY SANDERS. Macmillan. Pp. 423. \$5.50.

Designed as a text for courses in bibliography and method and as a guide for students in the writing of theses, dissertations, or other scholarly papers. After preliminary chapters on the materials and tools of research, the major portion of the book discusses methods, as applied to problems in editing, source study, chronology, etc. A fourth section contains suggestions on thesis writing, and appendixes supply specimen bibliographies, notes, and thesis pages.

GRAMMAR AND STYLE. By ROBERT WADDELL. William Sloane Associates. Pp. 380. \$2.75.

A systematic discussion of grammar which steers a middle road between prescriptive and descriptive extremes. The writer keeps his undergraduate charges in mind and tries to make his subject lucid and reasonable. Illustrations are ample. The majority are from student themes; some are from newspapers and other printed matter; a few are artificially contrived. The book may be used either as a text or as a reference work.

ORAL INTERPRETATION. By CHARLOTTE I. LEE. Houghton Mifflin. Pp. 596. \$3.50.

Miss Lee defines interpretation as "the art of re-creation through the use of body and voice."

She emphasizes the need of thoroughly understanding the materials to be interpreted and so stresses analysis of thought, structure, and style. The contents are divided into four main sections devoted to basic principles and to the interpretation of prose, drama, and poetry. Material for analysis and oral interpretation is provided at the end of each chapter.

BASIC EXPERIENCES IN SPEECH. By SETH A. FESSENDEN and WAYNE N. THOMPSON. Prentice-Hall. Pp. 427. \$3.75.

The authors employ a functional approach to the problems of speech with the definite purpose of relating the objectives of the college freshman speech course to the students' own values. The emphasis is on "how to do it." A series of speech problems in common speech situations is set forth in a planned progression starting with the least difficult. Stress is put on narration, exposition, and argumentation. Final chapters include materials on such specialized situations as audio-visual aid and microphone speaking.

STUDY TYPE OF READING EXERCISES: COLLEGE LEVEL. By RUTH STRANG. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. Pp. 152. \$0.80.

A series of thousand-word articles designed to give the student information about reading and study methods and practice in reading efficiently. Questions at the end of each article are of three types: composition, short answer, and multiple choice. Emphasis is on "speed of comprehension," not speed.

OUTLINES OF BRITISH DRAMA, 1497-1642. By KARL J. HOLZKNECHT. Barnes & Noble. Pp. 442. \$3.00. Illustrated.

Originally published in the "College Outline Series" under the title, *Outlines of Tudor and Stuart Plays, 1497-1642*, now available in this clothbound edition. Includes synopses of plots, an index of characters, an index of plays and playwrights, and a tabulated bibliography of standard anthologies of Tudor and Stuart plays.

THE SPANISH TRAGEDY. By THOMAS KYD. Edited by CHARLES T. PROUTY. Appleton-Century-Crofts. Pp. 102. \$0.30. Paperback.

Workbooks

VOCABULARY BUILDING. By G. REXFORD DAVIS. William Sloane Associates. \$1.65. Pp. 208. Tests, Forms A and B, each \$0.20.

PRACTICAL WORD STUDY: FORM B. By W. POWELL JONES. Oxford University Press. Pp. 98. \$1.50.

Each of these workbooks, in addition to containing the usual vocabulary-building materials, has its own distinctive features. Davis, instead of employing a list of *roots* in dealing with words of Latin derivation, uses a list of Latin *words*, with their principal forms and meanings and a list of Latin derivatives. His tests do not induce synonym matching. They are instead designed to test vocabulary comprehension of words in common use. Jones stresses word-building elements in the order of their appearance in common English words. He also introduces optional material for special students in science, engineering, and law.

PRACTICE IN WRITING. By CLARK EMERY and WILLIAM WIGHT. William Sloane Associates. Pp. 302. \$2.75.

A WORKBOOK FOR ENGLISH COMPOSITION: FORM B. By E. G. BALLARD and E. S. CLIFTON. Rinehart. Pp. 120. \$1.25.

Clark and Emery's book is divided into two sections, the first stressing sentence analysis, the second providing more than a hundred writing problems, very varied in difficulty and scope and of a kind that students as human beings have a need of being able to write. Ballard and Clifton's workbook includes exercises in all the basic skills. It may be used with any handbook, and at the end of each exercise references are given to many of these.

PRACTICAL ADVERTISING: TELEVISION SUPPLEMENT AND WORKBOOK. By HARRY P. BRIDGE. Rinehart. Pp. 70. \$1.50.

A workbook for the well-known textbook, *Practical Advertising*.

Professional

AN ESSAY ON MAN. By ALEXANDER POPE. Edited by MAYNARD MACK. Yale University Press. Pp. 186. \$5.00.

EPISTLES TO SEVERAL PERSONS. By ALEXANDER POPE. Edited by F. W. BATESON. Yale University Press. Pp. 190. \$5.00.

These two volumes comprise the first and second parts of the third volume of the Twickenham edition of Pope's poems. Each part is prefaced by a considerable introduction and is well documented. Professor Mack is concerned primarily with the interpretation of the *Essay on Man* as an artistic whole and with placing it in the central tradition of European thought, a new approach toward this particular poem. Professor Bateson has shown that the "standard" text of the *Moral Essays* is in part unacceptable and has restored it in accordance with Pope's intentions. These new emphases probably will call forth new evaluations of these poems.

ALEXANDER POPE: CATHOLIC POET. By FRANCIS BEAUCHESNE THORNTON. Pellegrini & Cudahy. Pp. 312. \$4.75.

This very readable work has been in the making almost twenty years, three of which the

author spent at Oxford and one at the British Museum. At present he is the book editor of the *Catholic Digest*. Pope was the only Roman Catholic writer in the literary and court circle of Queen Anne. Father Thornton interprets Pope's important works, especially *The Essay on Man*, against the background of the poet's religious convictions. His purpose has been to show that the *Essay on Man* does not depend upon Bolingbroke in the way that many have thought it does, and his interpretation makes more sensible a great deal of what has seemed illogical and inconsistent about Pope.

A CONGREVE GALLERY. By KATHLEEN M. LYNCH. Harvard University Press. Pp. 196. \$3.50.

Of the dramatist William Congreve we know too little, despite Professor John Hodge's scrupulous biography. However, he was a "cheerful" person even in adversity and had many friends. Five of these are the subjects of the portrait essays in this volume: Joseph Keally, an Irishman who studied with Congreve at the Middle Temple and to whom Congreve wrote many letters; Robert Fitzgerald, Keally's brother-in-law; Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, the

love of Congreve's later life; Mary, Duchess of Leeds, Henrietta's daughter and possibly Congreve's; and Dr. Messenger Monsey, the popular London physician of the day. A striking picture exhibition, but the highlights inevitably fall on the friends, and Congreve remains half-masked.

THE BEST OF DEFOE'S "REVIEW": AN ANTHOLOGY. Compiled and edited by WILLIAM L. PAYNE. Columbia University Press. Pp. 289. \$4.00.

Mention the eighteenth century, and the Sir Roger de Coverly Papers are almost sure to come to mind; yet Addison's *Spectator* reached only a segment of contemporary readers—much as the *New Yorker* does today—and lived less than two years. Defoe's *Review* lasted nine years, and, writing in the manner of the *Nation*, his concern about "society" was very much akin to ours. He was trying to arouse the middle group of "freeholders" to the dangers of corrupt election practices as a threat to democratic rights, to the abuses of the privilege of a free press, to the partisan politics which were depressing the national credit, etc. Professor Payne's excellent edition reads with such contemporaneity of feeling that the reader instinctively starts to write a letter to the press!

LITERATURE AND THEOLOGY IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND. By KENNETH B. MURDOCK. Harvard University Press, 1949. Pp. 252. \$4.00.

This volume is written with the simplicity and lucidity that derives only from distinguished scholarship. Professor Murdock states in his preface that his purpose has been to show the relation between the New England Puritans' fundamental theological ideas and their literary theory and practice. Actually he has done much more. In discussing the works of the Puritan historians, "The Lord's Remembrancers," the "Personal Literature" of the Puritans, and their poetry, to determine how far and by what means theological ideas and religious emotions can be conveyed through art, he has also made a direct and salutary contribution to contemporary critical discussion about the extent to which the life and ideas of an author can be divorced from his art. The Puritans had convictions and these influenced their style of writing. Many of them wrote much better than we have thought. No student of American lit-

erature should fail to read this volume; all reflective Americans will find in it much to ponder.

NATIVE AMERICAN BALLADRY. By G. MALCOLM LAWS, JR. (Publications of the American Folklore Society: "Bibliographical Series," Vol. I.) Philadelphia, 1950. Pp. 276.

THE BRITISH TRADITIONAL BALLAD IN NORTH AMERICA. By TRISTRAM P. COFFIN. (Publications of the American Folklore Society: "Bibliographical Series," Vol. II.) Philadelphia, 1950. Pp. 188.

Two indispensable volumes for the student of folklore. Professor Laws has undertaken to winnow out the traditional American ballads from the great body of native and imported folk song. The first half of his book is a descriptive study of American ballad types, their origin and distribution, their forms and variants, etc.; the second half comprises a bibliographical syllabus of native ballads current in oral tradition. Professor Coffin provides for the ballad scholar a key to the published material on the Child ballad in America. American folk songs are scattered through a thousand books and libraries. This critical bibliography will be an invaluable guide for research scholars in American folklore.

JOHN BUNYAN: THE MAN AND HIS WORKS. By HENRI TALON. Harvard University Press. Pp. 340. \$5.00.

A biography of the great English Puritan written originally in French and first published in Paris. Its author is professor of English literature at the University of Dijon; its translator, Barbara Wall. A fully documented study of Bunyan's work written with verve and *élan*. Divided into three main parts: "The Inward Man," "The Writer and Man of Action," "Bunyan's Thought." Includes eighteen reproductions of illustrations from the first to the latest edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* and a portrait frontispiece.

CLAREMONT COLLEGE READING CONFERENCE: SIXTEENTH YEARBOOK, 1951. Claremont College Curriculum Laboratory. Pp. 130.

Defining reading as "the process of making discriminating reactions" to anything, this year-

book deals not only with book reading but also with the mass media of communication, human relations (reading people), and even lighting. Strang, DeBoer, Witty, and Taba are contributors widely known among our readers.

DELINQUENTS IN THE MAKING. By SHELDON and ELEANOR GLUECK. Harper. \$3.00.

Over a period of ten years a staff of experts made an extensive survey of the backgrounds and environments of 500 delinquent boys and of 500 nondelinquents to discover what made one group go wrong. This condensed popularized report should encourage teachers, parents, and others to understand the child at an early age and give help to those who need intelligent consideration, to those who can be adjusted.

GUIDE TO REFERENCE BOOKS. CONSTANCE M. WINCHELL. American Library Association. Pp. 645 (7½" × 10½"). \$10.00.

This most-used work of its kind was last revised in 1936. Now the editor of supplements to the sixth edition has reorganized the book, dropped superseded references, and added new ones. It now has 500 entries. Each major section has an introduction, chiefly for library-school students, and some other features for the same users. In the main it is for librarians choosing reference books and for researchers. The organization seems convenient, the typography easy on the eyes, the information sufficient. An invaluable searchlight, with new bulb and freshly polished lens.

Pamphlets

THE BACKGROUND OF THOMSON'S "LIBERTY." By ALAN DUGALD MCKILLOP. (Rice Institute Pamphlets, Vol. 38, No. 2.) Pp. 123.

An analytical account of the diverse ideas and patterns woven into this eighteenth-century poem which warns against the loss of liberty through the corrosive effects of luxury and corruption.

STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE SINCE 1850. By CECIL B. WILLIAMS. (Bulletin of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Vol. 48, No. 25.) Pp. 35.

Four brief essays: "The American Local Color Movement," "Mark Twain: American Paradox," "Avowal Scenes in American Historical Fiction," and "The Continuing Vogue of the Religious Historical Novel."

THE ROMANTIC COMPROMISE IN THE NOVELS OF WINSTON CHURCHILL. By CHARLES CHILD WALCUTT. ("Contributions in Modern Philology," No. 18.) University of Michigan Press. Pp. 53.

The author of *The Crisis*, *Richard Carvel*, and *Coniston* was writing at a time when the ideas of Christian dualism were receiving the first hard impact of scientific materialism. Walcutt shows that Churchill's problems as a novelist in part stemmed from this clash of philosophies.

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL SECURITY. Educational Policies Commission or the American Council on Education. Pp. 60. \$0.50.

Chapter heads: "The World We Face," "The Role of the Schools," "The Role of Higher Education," "The Problem of Military Manpower." A soberly courageous assessment of our situation and duty.

WHITMAN AND ROLLESTON: A CORRESPONDENCE. By HORST FRENZ. (Indiana University Publications: "Humanities Series," No. 26.) Pp. 137. \$1.50.

Thomas Rolleston, an Irish scholar, historian, and poet, was one of the initiating forces of the Irish Renaissance. He was also a sympathetic critic of German literature and for years reviewed German books for the *London Times*. It was thus quite logical that having become convinced of Whitman's genius he should turn his abilities to the translating of his poems into German. Some of the letters which Professor Frenz presents here have to do with that translation; others reflect the genuine interest each seems to have had in the intellectual activities of the other.

CHARTING THE COURSE FOR AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN A PERIOD OF PARTIAL MOBILIZATION. National Education Association, Washington, D.C. Pp. 79.

Reports of the study groups in the sixth national conference on higher education, April 2-4, 1951, at Chicago.

HUMAN RELATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION. Edited by FRANCIS J. BROWN and RICHARD B. ANLIOT. ("American Council on Education Studies," Vol. XV, No. 51.) Pp. 74.

A report of a national student conference held at Earlham College, March 29-31, 1951.

DISCRIMINATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION. Edited by FRANCIS J. BROWN, FLOYD W. REEVES, and RICHARD B. ANLIOT. ("American Council on Education Studies," Vol. XV, No. 50.) Pp. 73.

A report on the Midwest Educator Conference, November 3-4, 1950, at Chicago.

RESIDENCE AND MIGRATION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS, 1949-50. By ROBERT C. STORY. (Federal Security Agency, Misc. No. 14.) Pp. 61. \$0.35.

Nonfiction

D. H. LAWRENCE AND HUMAN EXISTENCE. By FATHER WILLIAM TIVERTON. Foreword by T. S. Eliot. Philosophical Library. Pp. 138. \$3.00.

The author is an Anglican priest who thinks that the works of Lawrence should be re-examined from the Christian angle, and one of his themes is that Lawrence can teach Christians lessons they should have known but have forgotten. However, it would be unfair to imply that he is riding a horse, because his book contains genuine literary criticism to the point of its title.

LITERARY STYLE AND MUSIC. By HERBERT SPENCER. Philosophical Library. Pp. 119.

Four essays which embody Spencer's views on basic elements of aesthetics are here reprinted in a handy pocket-sized volume.

THE WESTERN TRADITION. With Foreword by LORD LAYTON. Beacon Press. Pp. 110. \$2.00.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT. By ERNST CASSIRER. Translated by FRITZ KOELLN and JAMES PETTEGROVE. Princeton University Press. Pp. 365. \$6.00.

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historian and philosopher. Cassirer rejects the point of view that the Age of Reason was primarily an analytic period and shows that it produced a completely original form of philosophic thought. A distinguished contribution to intellectual history.

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THE WRITING OF BIOGRAPHY. By CATHERINE DRINKER BOWEN. Boston: The Writer, Inc. Pp. 31. \$1.50.

The popular biographer explains the processes of research and of shaping the information into an interesting story. She makes her exposition clear and vivid by tracing her own work in

producing *John Adams and the American Revolution*, which is "narrative" rather than "critical" in presentation.

THE RIDDLE OF EMILY DICKINSON. By REBECCA PATTERSON. Houghton. \$5.00.

Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award winner. Other biographers have suggested certain men who may have inspired Emily Dickinson's love poems. One has referred to a "too-much-loved woman friend." After impressive research both in America and abroad, Mrs. Patterson is convinced that Kate Scott Anthon, who spent years in England but visited Emily's family, was the "lover" of the poems. The study is impressive and well planned, but controversial.

SHAKESPEARE. By G. I. DUTHIE. ("Hutchinson's University Library.") Longmans. Trade, \$2.25; text, \$1.80.

The English-educated McGill University professor deals chiefly with Shakespeare's ideas, especially the unexpressed ones which governed his writing. The order-disorder antithesis is most emphasized. Cf. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being* and Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture*.

AMERICAN LITERATURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By HENRICH STRAUMANN. ("Hutchinson's University Library.") Longmans. Pp. 189. Trade, \$2.25; text, \$1.80.

A professor of English literature in the University of Zurich outlines American thought and letters, 1900-1950. Critical aesthetic evaluation is subordinate to his study of our attitudes. Quite possibly Straumann sometimes oversimplifies in his classification and misplaces his emphasis in interpreting individual writers; but his comments are, on the whole, informed and keen, and his outsider's view of us both fresh and plausible.

AN ARTIST IN AMERICA. By THOMAS HART BENTON. Twayne. \$3.95.

A frank, full-blooded autobiography, revised up to date. Seventy-nine reproductions of murals, painting, and sketches. Important as a record of the development of American art. 324 pages.

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Written as a narrative, the philosophy and logic lectures of this respected North Carolina professor are tasty as well as substantial. A rare book for the simplicity with which it tackles problems usually handled in the abstract.

A FOREIGN POLICY FOR AMERICANS. By ROBERT A. TAIT. Doubleday. \$2.00.

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A GUIDE TO THE INDIAN TRIBES OF OKLAHOMA. By MURIEL H. WRIGHT. University of Oklahoma Press. \$5.00.

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Tanya Matthews, born in Russia, tells the story of her life. A daughter of the bourgeoisie,

she was young at the time of the Russian Revolution, but in the years following she suffered with the people purgings, revolts, collectivization, hunger, prison. She now lives in France. She sponsors no political party.

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Technical but easy to understand. It adds pleasure to television viewing and a greater appreciation for what is behind the scenes. It will interest older boys and girls from either the writing angle or the television one.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR. By FLETCHER PRATT. Pocket Books. \$0.35.

AN EXPERIMENT IN INTERNATIONAL CULTURED RELATIONS: A REPORT OF THE STAFF OF THE COMMISSION ON THE OCCUPIED AREAS. HAROLD E. SNYDER and GEORGE E. BEAUCHAMP. American Council on Education. Pp. 112. \$1.50.

Poetry, Fiction, and Drama

JANE HADDEN. By ROSAMOND MARSHALL. Prentice-Hall. \$3.00.

Eighteenth-century London is the background. The heroine was a foundling, protégé, and serving maid of a kindly old woman, who died. Jane fled to London, where she became a waitress and met Dr. Johnson, whom she was to meet again when she became an author. She fell in love with a man—another foundling, who thought he was heir to a title—who wrote "penny dreadfuls." From him she learned to write—and other things. There are many points of interest: eighteenth-century London; three foundlings—all gifted; two untrained people who wrote for a wide circle of admirers. They wrote of life as they knew it. There are glimpses of Newgate and Fleet Street prisons and of Johnson and Boswell.

THE DAUGHTER OF TIME. By JOSEPHINE TEV. Macmillan. \$2.50.

"Truth is the daughter of time." Inspector Grant, of Scotland Yard, who prided himself on his ability to read faces, amused himself while in the hospital with a broken leg by looking at hundreds of photographs and prints with names on the back. One he studied carefully and thought, "A saint or a judge," turned the card, and read, "Richard the III"—murderer of two little princes. With the assistance of a man skilled in research, Grant studied files of evidence and history, and *proved* (?) that Richard the III—well, "truth will out." A tour de force of mystery fiction.

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JEFFERSON SELLECK. By CARL JONAS. Little, Brown. \$3.00.

A novel written in diary form. A middle-aged businessman (a Babbitt) becomes an invalid in his middle fifties and writes his biography, covering the time of World War I, prohibition, and the New Deal. He was quite a decent fellow, an average man, a busy successful man—but he was not free from fear. Very interesting. February co-selection, Book-of-the-Month Club.

ROAD TO THE SUN. By MARJORIE STONE-MAN DOUGLAS. Rinehart. \$3.50.

Jason Horne, a Florida farmer, shot and killed a man who blew up a dike and ruined his rice crop. He was sent to prison, and, though he was later acquitted, his conscience troubled him. A beautifully written tale of expiation.

THE GREAT RASCAL. By JAY MONAGHAN. Little, Brown. \$4.50.

Ned Buntline, originator of the dime novel, led a life as wild and woolly as those of his

heroes. It was hard to tell the real from the fanciful when he wrote or talked. Americana much to be desired by collectors. Fact and fiction. Entertaining.

COLLECTED POEMS. By MARIANNE MOORE. Macmillan. Pp. 180. \$3.00.

This volume has recently brought Miss Moore two of the most prized national literary awards—the Bollingen Poetry Prize and the National Book Award for Poetry. Much of the poetry was in earlier volumes now out of print. The poems are difficult because of subject matter and "oblique" expression—that is, incoherence and symbolism not readily caught. Lines break not only in the middle of phrases—particularly after "the"—but also in the middle of words. A very careful workman, Miss Moore is a poets' poet. W. H. Auden says: "The endless musical and structural possibilities of Miss Moore's invention are a treasure which all future English poets will be able to plunder. I have already stolen a great deal myself."

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PRIDE'S CASTLE. By FRANK YERBY. Pocket Books. \$0.35.

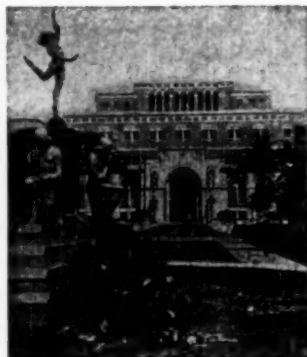
That professor best communicates his moral convictions who can persuade his students that he is more than a professor, that he is more than a specialist in subject matter. Students sense very well what is the product of free reflection and genuine involvement and what is the dusty stock of the trade. They learn soon whether a professor has mastered or been mastered by his subject, whether behind the façade there is a man and a scholar or simply a scholar. The student—at least the intelligent one—is impressed when he is taught by a man who has made up his mind about his own values and lives his life above, though not apart from, the profession to which he is devoted.—J. GLENN GRAY, "How Teach Virtue," *AAUP Bulletin*.



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